

Cornell University Library
HD 6668.R32R27

Engines and men; the history of the Asso



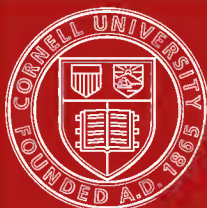
3 1924 002 359 077

11r

THE LIBRARY
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL
OF
INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR
RELATIONS



AT
CORNELL UNIVERSITY



Cornell University
Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

<http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924002359077>

ENGINES AND MEN

ENGINES AND MEN

THE HISTORY OF THE
ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF
LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
———AND FIREMEN———

A Survey of Organisation of Railways and
Railway Locomotive Men

BY
J. R. RAYNES
“”

GOODALL & SUDDICK (1916) LTD.
TOWN HALL CHAMBERS, LEEDS
1921

CNH

HD
6669.
R32
R27
c.1

DEDICATED

TO ALL THE GALLANT FELLOWS WHO DOWN
THE LONG YEARS OF RAILWAY HISTORY HAVE
WORKED THE LOCOMOTIVES UNDER THE
DEPRESSING CONDITIONS OF LOW WAGES
AND LONG HOURS, AND STILL TOOK THEIR
PART IN BUILDING THIS SOCIETY FOR THE
EMANCIPATION OF ALL THE FRATERNITY.

PROPERTY OF LIBRARY
NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL
INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR RELATIONS
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

40456

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FIRST, I must put on record a sense of deep appreciation of the responsible task entrusted to me by Mr. Bromley and the Executive Committee. I have enjoyed the execution of it, the long months of exploration into the record, minutes and transactions of forty years. At times it has been arduous, but I think the writing of such a book is something worth living for. I have been able to trace the Society from a membership of 600 to one of 75,000, and for the change in conditions of work I must refer you to the story itself. By organisation you have won great things, and will yet win greater.

My second note must be of thanks, too, to Mr. Bromley for his advice and for the helpful manner in which he gave me carte-blanche and placed everything at my disposal; to Mr. Worthy Cooke for many helpful suggestions when he first read the manuscript; to Mr. Moore, Mr. Crossland, Mr. Wilson and other members of Head Office Staff for constant help in securing some wanted document. They have all contributed to make conditions as pleasant as possible.

I must also acknowledge the great help furnished by an index to articles on railway service, prepared for Mr. Fox by Mr. John Healey, of Sheffield, and covering the period 1879-1905.

Several pointed questions have been addressed to me about the evolution of locomotives, and I have decided to leave the reader who is interested to follow up that subject himself. My interest has been that of men, and if this book stirs many keen questions I shall be the better pleased. At the conclusion will be found a list of all the books consulted for the present work, and I only hope my readers will be so interested as to follow on with some of them.

JOHN R. RAYNES

FOREWORD

BY MR. JOHN BROMLEY, GENERAL SECRETARY.

IT has long been my desire to have compiled a History of our Society, as I have felt that the record of a Society like our own, which has had such a continued struggle, would lend itself particularly well to such a project, and that it would be not only a source of delight to our older members, and an inspiration to the younger ones, but a great record for us all.

It was not, however, until June, 1920, that I was able to find time to collect all the mass of requisite material and place the matter in the hands of Mr. J. R. Raynes, himself a skilled Journalist and a writer of books, with the result that after nearly a year of hard work on the part of Mr. Raynes I am able to write a foreword to this volume and present it to our members, in the hope and with the sincere wish that it may be a delight to every one of its readers ; that older members may in its pages be able to fight their battles over again, and joy in the accomplishment of at least some of their early ideas, and in dreams which have come true. That younger members may, by reading of the

“ Old, unhappy, far-off things
And battles long ago,”

realise some of the immensity of the early struggles, and thereby be enthused to carry on the good work with renewed courage and ever greater energy.

I feel that not only will this book be valuably informative as a chronological record of the Society's progress, but a real inspiration to all interested members, for it will be impossible for anyone reading, first of the formation and early vicissitudes of the Society, then tracing its progress step by step through forty years of storm and sun, until finally success begins to crown the efforts and our present position is reached, without themselves feeling an uplifting and a keen desire to buckle on their own armour and perform deeds of “ derring do ” in carrying the Society to yet greater successes in the near and distant future.

This History is packed with solid information for the student of our Society's work and efforts, and also carries with it a condensed record of the evolution of the Locomotive and of the Railways of this country generally, and should therefore commend itself to every one of our members.

It is in some respects almost pathetic to read of the very moderate demands of the members in years gone by, and to compare them with those of the present day, put forward by men strong in their knowledge of a powerful Union behind them, with a greater realisation of what they are entitled to demand from society, and with a breadth of vision undared by the early pioneers.

How interesting to compare the figures of funds and membership at the end of 1882 with those of the close of 1920. In the former year we find the total receipts to have been £1,652 17s. 6d., expenditure £873 2s. 7½d., the funds at the end of the year being £2,266 3s. 3½d., whilst some twenty Branches boasted of a combined total membership of 671. At the end of 1920 we find 439 Branches with 71,344 members, several individual Branches having a greater number of members than the whole Society numbered in 1882, income £123,536 7s. 11d., expenditure £68,164 10s. 9d., and total funds £256,468 3s. 7d.

What an achievement, having regard to the difficulties which have been overcome. Yet we know there are yet greater heights to climb, greater events even than those recorded here are before us, and in humbly submitting this book to all our splendid members who man the iron horse or juggle with the electric mystery, I hope and believe that the men will be found to do credit to the heritage our pioneers have left to us, by fearlessly facing and overcoming all dangers and difficulties; and that our great Society may carry on from strength to strength, from success to even greater success, is the earnest wish of

Yours sincerely,

J. BROMLEY.

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I	
The Early Days of Railways—The First Locomotives—A Link Between Stephenson and the A.S.L.E. & F.—Stephenson's Success - - - - -	1
CHAPTER II	
Rapid Developments—The Railway Companies—Speed and Efficiency—The Railway Mania—War of Companies—An Engine Arrested—Bad Conditions of Service—North Eastern Drivers—The First Societies - - - -	14
CHAPTER III	
Our Society—The A.S.R.S. and the Strike—The Change in 1880—Victimisation and Revolt—A Famous Letter—The First Branches—First Executive Meetings—Strike and Victimisation Pay - - - - -	25
CHAPTER IV	
Launching Out—Drivers' Need for Protection—The Tay Bridge Exposure—A Driver in Handcuffs—Severity of Companies—The Clarion Call—Help Yourselfes - - -	36
CHAPTER V	
This Memorial Humbly Sheweth—The First Executive Council—Early Branch Members—Fines and Victimisation—A Rift Within the Lute—Thomas Sunter Becomes Secretary - - - - -	49

CHAPTER VI

PAGE

Trouble on the Midland—First Emblems and Medallions— The Model Engines—A Calamitous Strike—The Generous Executive—Bitter Memories—The Tragedy of Tom Ball—Dot and Wool Tests—A North Eastern Programme - - - - -	61
--	----

CHAPTER VII

Railway Accidents—Footboards, Subways, and Bridges— No Compensation—Exhaustion by Long Hours—Con- ditions of Slavery—A South Eastern Programme— Scottish Drivers Victimised—Terrible Records - -	71
---	----

CHAPTER VIII

The Hexthorpe Disaster Trial—Taylor and Davies Acquitted —A Great Victory—Growth of the Society—North Eastern and Great Western Wage Movements—Advice Against Strikes—Messages from America—The L. & N.W. in 1890—New Rules of 1889 - - - - -	80
---	----

CHAPTER IX

Wages and Engine Power—The Taff Vale Strike—Select Committee on Railway Workers' Hours—An Associated Programme—The Miners' Strike of 1893—Fines and Suspensions—A Year of Testing - - - - -	92
--	----

CHAPTER X

Mr. Parfitt's Recollections—The First Representative E.C.— The Society in London—Taff Vale Trouble—A Proud Position—England's Wealthiest Society—The Orphan Fund—Events of Jubilee Year—The Engineers' Strike— Talk of Federation - - - - -	103
---	-----

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS

XIII

CHAPTER XI

PAGE

The Twentieth Century—A Veteran's Visit—American Engines—Death of Mr. Sunter—A Notable Loss—Mr. Fox Elected General Secretary—The Important Year 1903—Mr. Parfitt Appointed Organiser—Centralisation of Funds—Labour Representation—The Federation Scheme—Its History - - - - -	112
---	-----

CHAPTER XII

Still Growing — The Loughor Inquiry — Coroners and Organisers—Friction with the A.S.R.S.—The 1907 Programme—Recognition Refused—Driver Webster Acquitted—The South Leeds Contests—Three Organisers—Salisbury and Grantham Disasters—A Rough Night at Barry—Driver Gourlay's Sentence - - - - -	126
--	-----

CHAPTER XIII

The Crisis of 1907—The Recognition Question—Mr. Bell's Attitude—The Shrewsbury Disaster—Conciliation Boards—Mr. Fox Visits America—American Delegates to England—Brakes and Heavy Loads—A Libel Action—The Fourth Organiser—Mr. Moore Elected Assistant Secretary—The Osborne Judgment - - - - -	138
--	-----

CHAPTER XIV

"Confiscation" Boards—The First National Strike—Mr. Asquith's Threat—A Prompt Reply—Bats and Bayonets—The Royal Commission—Wages and Dividends—Two Railway Disasters—The Sympathetic Strike—The 1912 Conference - - - - -	147
---	-----

CHAPTER XV

Illness of Mr. Fox—A "Daily Express" Canard—End of a Strenuous Life—A Difficult Time—Local Strikes in 1913—The N.U.R.—Conciliation Again—Aisgill Disaster—The Eight Hours Ballot—Mr. Bromley Elected General Secretary—A New Era Opens - - - - -	160
--	-----

CHAPTER XVI

PAGE

The Declaration of War—Wages and Prices—Partial Employment—The First Bonus—Profiteering—Members Enlisting—The “White Feather” Taunt—Mr. Mason’s Election—A Writ for Libel—Another Bonus (October 1915)—A Trying Time (September 1916)—Members in Public Life - - - - -	172
--	-----

CHAPTER XVII

Food Control—Compulsory Military Service—The Man Power Bill—N.U.R. and Craft Unions—A Libel Action—War Time Problems—Demand for Railway Nationalisation—The Sliding Scale—Death of the President—A Ministry of Labour - - - - -	184
---	-----

CHAPTER XVIII

The Year 1917—Growth of Activity—A Memorable Conference—Compulsory Enlistment—A National Crisis—Special Conference Summoned—Sir A. Stanley’s Pledge—Its Redemption Secured—The Eight Hours Day—A Triumph for the Society - - - - -	195
--	-----

CHAPTER XIX

1917 Conciliation Scheme—The National Programme—The Committee on Production—Another Advance—The Stream of War Traffic—Tributes to Railway Workers—Women as Engine Cleaners—The Gretna Disaster—Presentation to Mr. Wride—District Councils—The Comb Out—Luxury Spending—Extra Food Allowance - - -	208
--	-----

CHAPTER XX

The One Union Movement — The April (1918) Wage Advance—Panel of Parliamentary Candidates—New and Increased Benefits—The District Councils at Work—The September Advance—The Strikes of 1918 - - - - -	220
---	-----

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS

XV

CHAPTER XXI

PAGE

A Boon to Members—Chafing Under the Truce—End of the War—The Improved National Programme—A General Election—London Traffic Agreement—The Tube Strike—National Programme Presented—Story of Famous Negotiations	232
--	-----

CHAPTER XXII

Change from War Conditions—The Coal Commission—The Ministry of Transport—Railway War Records—Society and the N.U.R.—Reinstatement on the G.N.R.—North Eastern Strike—Two New Organisers—Victimised Police—A Wage Agreement at Last	248
--	-----

CHAPTER XXIII

Standardisation—A National Strike—Nine Days Wonder—Solidarity and Victory—Many Congratulations—Rapid Growth—Railway Control—The Ministry of Transport—Zonal System—Joint Control—The Society Promotes a Bill	263
--	-----

CHAPTER XXIV

Irish Questions—Fraternal Visitors—Eyesight Test—75,000 Members—Further Advances—Supervisory Members—The Miners' Strike—Marching Forward—The Best is yet to be	281
--	-----



An Early Emblem of the Society, painted in water colours but never reproduced.

CHAPTER I

The Early Days of Railways—The First Locomotives—A Link Between Stephenson and the A.S.L.E. & F.—Stephenson's Success.

AS we look back upon all the wonderful changes presented by the nineteenth century, from the steamship to the telegram, it is probably the steam engine which comes puffing into the centre of the picture as the greatest and most substantial innovation of them all. The locomotive indeed filled a priceless place in the scheme of things, for it linked up in a manner never before comprehended the goods and the market. It diminished distances and raced against time. Small towns in the path of this monster of strength grew into cities, and England began to change in character very markedly. The changes were social as well as industrial, for the era of steam power affected the whole life of the nation. So deeply do railways affect the body politic that I soon found it would be impossible to begin the history of the A.S.L.E. & F. at the year 1880. Circumstances were preparing the way for it fifty years earlier, and all the forces at work in the half century that followed were really forging and shaping the destiny of the Society. It became as essential to enginemen as the engine itself was to this nation and others. The whole service turned completely upon engineers and firemen, who in those early days were the silk-hatted aristocracy of the line.

Not many of our 75,000 members to-day will be aware that one of our earliest members was actually a driver with George Stephenson

and his son Robert Stephenson in 1832, but such was the case. This and other important connecting links with railway history make it essential that our history should begin with a survey of the early history of railways, and of the earlier organisations of men which preceded the A.S.L.E. & F., and finally of the conditions prevailing on the service generally in the year 1880, when the Society sprang into life.

Thomas West Smith, of Leicester, the member referred to, was the last survivor of the Stephenson group of pioneer drivers. He was born in the year 1808, and began in the railway service in his twenty-third year. He was first employed as a porter at West-bridge Station, on the Leicester & Swannington Railway, which was opened on July 17th, 1832. He later cleaned and fired "The Comet," built by Stephenson at Newcastle, conveyed by sea to Hull and then by canal to Leicester. This water carriage was made necessary by the absence of any railways, and it was some months after the safe delivery of "The Comet," which made a great sensation at Leicester, that the tender came along in the same way to keep it company. During those months the water was carried in a large cask in a coal waggon. Other engines which joined the same service later were "The Phoenix," "Samson," "Goliath," and "Hercules"; and the drivers had many experiences with George Stephenson and "young Robert," as they called him. The signals on those early lines consisted of a pole with a pulley, and the rule was "go ahead" unless a red flag or a red lamp was showing. The drivers carried bugles to give warning of their approach at level crossings, but after a few carts had been wrecked by the new monsters, the engines were fitted with whistles which were like little steam trumpets.

Even by day the passage of an engine caused wonder and amazement, but when they began to run through the darkness of night they caused consternation. They were pictured as lurid ogres of fire and steel tearing through the peaceful country, stampeding horses and cattle and alarming old folks. The airships of the twentieth century caused less astonishment and interest than did

the steam engines of the 1830 period. The old open-topped carriages gave passengers the mixed blessings of scenery and breeze and smuts from the engine. They afforded opportunity for sportsmen to shoot at rooks and other birds on their rail journeys, until their practice became dangerous to others, and it had to be forbidden. Many of the wayside stations consisted of a single hut, which served duty as stationmaster's office, weighing machine room, passengers' waiting room, and licensed house, the stationmaster having the further duty of innkeeper.

The goods guards of those early days had no vans or waggons, but rode in an exalted position on top at the rear, after the pattern of the guard or conductor of the stage coach they were rapidly superseding. To stop the train they ran along the top to apply the brake with a sort of forked stick, known as a "sprigger." On the narrow little footplates of the engines the levers were always in motion, causing many drivers to receive smart raps and bruises. The cab, as we know it to-day, was in 1830 only a strip of standing room flanked by a short railing.

Wooden ways, with wood or cast iron rails on wood sleepers, had been instituted as early as 1630 to facilitate horse transit upon constantly used tracks, and in 1767 the Colebrookdale Ironworks cast iron plate rails. In 1789 William Jessop, of Loughborough, introduced flanged wheels, but the nineteenth century had run more than twenty years of its course before men thought of using the power of steam to expedite transport. When Geo. Stephenson asserted that he could run passenger coaches at twelve to fifteen miles an hour he was regarded with suspicion as an optimist, but now "on fire horses and wind horses we career," as Carlyle said, at anything up to eighty miles an hour.

Steam power was realised as much as 2,000 years ago, for Hero of Alexandria, about 200 B.C., wrote a book on the expansive force of steam, in which he described the cylinder, piston, slide-valve, and common clack-valve. The first attempts to harness steam and to make it do the behest of men was about 250 years ago, for stationary engines. It was not, however, until the year 1803 that

the first tramroad or railway locomotive engine was constructed. The name "locomotive" is derived from two Latin words, "locus," a place; and "motio," motion; the locomotive engine being therefore an engine capable of moving itself from place to place.

Richard Trevithick is without any doubt the father of the locomotive engine. He built the first in 1803, with money provided by his cousin Vivian. He employed high pressure steam, smooth flat wheels, and conveyed the exhaust steam from the cylinder to the chimney by a pipe. The first engine is naturally a matter of close interest to those who man the giants of to-day, and it may be added that the boiler of Trevithick's engine was six feet in length, and contained a return flue tube, the chimney being at the same end as the fire door. The engine had one cylinder placed horizontally, eight inches diameter, the stroke being extremely long, four feet six inches. It was an extraordinary looking object, with its conspicuous cog wheels and tall chimney.

It was tried on February 24th, 1804, upon the Perrydarran cast-iron plateway, or tramroad, when it conveyed trucks containing ten tons of bar iron and about seventy excited persons for a distance of nine miles to Merthyr Tydvil. This triumph showed that Trevithick had started well, and on sound principles. He did not follow up the perfecting of his machine, leaving that to others, but to him goes the honour of building, and to Merthyr goes the honour of receiving, the first locomotive that ever ran a journey on rails.

The scene is transferred to Leeds in the year 1811, when Mr. John Blenkinsop, proprietor of the Middleton Colliery, near that city, decided to have his coals conveyed from Middleton to Leeds by a locomotive engine instead of by horses. He therefore gave an order to Matthew Murray, a Leeds engineer, to construct such an engine. Murray and Blenkinsop agreed that sufficient adhesion could not be obtained between smooth wheels and smooth rails to control loads, and they adopted the rack-rail and cog-wheel gear. The power developed by the steam cylinders was communicated to the large cog or driving wheel, the four ordinary wheels

of the engine being simply for support, and having no contact with the motive force. This engine ran its first trip in August of 1812, and for several years worked with others of a similar design in conveying coal from Middleton to Leeds.

In the meantime Chapman's chain engine had been tried on the Hetton Colliery Tramroad, near Newcastle-on-Tyne (patented December, 1811), but it proved a failure. There were other failures too, for William Hedley, in February, 1813, tried his first locomotive, intended for use on Mr. Blackett's Wylam Colliery line, but it proved a failure for want of steam. Mr. Blackett, however, retained his faith in steam power, and he instructed Hedley to build a second engine, completed in May of 1813, named "Puffing Billy." This engine, tried on the Wylam line, had a wrought iron boiler, with a return flue, and like Trevithick's pioneer engine, it had the chimney at the same end as the fire-door. It had two vertical cylinders, the piston-rods being connected to beams, from which motion was communicated to the four smooth driving wheels by means of toothed gear. This engine continued working at Wylam until 1862, when it was removed to the South Kensington Museum. Hedley and Blackett, it should be noticed, followed Trevithick in preferring smooth wheels on smooth rails, and they did not follow Murray and Blenkinsop as to cogs.

A patent was obtained in 1813 by Mr. Brunton, of the Butterley Ironworks, Derbyshire, for the locomotion of an engine without the aid of the adhesion of the wheels. It was literally a steam horse, having a pair of hind legs actuated by steam cylinders, but it proved a failure.

We now come to the entry of George Stephenson into the locomotive world. Ideas had hitherto been confined to crude engines intended to pull coal along colliery tracks, but Stephenson nursed an altogether wider vision of the new possibilities. Let us briefly trace the life of this remarkable man, the father of footplate workers. He was born in a small cottage between Close House and Wylam, in Northumberland, within nine miles of Newcastle, about 1772, and on June 9th, 1781, he started work at twopence per day on a

farm, and was attending the plough at early hours when little children ought to be in bed. His next duty was to pick bats and coal droppings, and when the overseer came round he used to hide lest he be thought too little to earn a living. Like all the poor children of his day, he was working hard before he could read or write, but he mastered those arts later.

Shortly after the age of 13, George Stephenson worked as a brakeman for Waterrow Pit, on the tramway between Wylam and Newburn, his father being at Walbottle. A large dog fetched his dinner daily from Walbottle to Wylam tramway. A removal of the family brought him to Killingworth, where George Stephenson became stoker to a colliery engine. Working early and late and at all hours of the night, his wages were then only one shilling a day. He really thought his fortune was made when his wage rose to twelve shillings weekly. He was still a stoker when advanced to 17s. a week, with overtime added, and as a young man he was sober, industrious, and very studious of all the ways of steam engines. He ran the risk of being forced into the Militia, or being seized by a press gang for the Navy, and, like many other young men, thought of going to America. He was married at the age of 22, and in 1803 his only child Robert was born.

Stephenson tried his hand at laying down tramways, or waggonways as they were called, and he was making headway as a mining engineer. "I was, however, a poor man," he afterwards said, and in order to educate his son, "How do you think I did? I betook myself to mending my neighbours' clocks and watches at night after my day's work was done, and thus I got the means of bringing up my son." He had seen a locomotive at Wylam, and set himself to contrive one which would work much better, as the irregular action of the cylinders made such jerks in the working as continually tended to shake it to pieces. Lord Ravensworth and the Killingworth owners supplied him with money to make a locomotive, and in July, 1814, it was tried upon the tramway, being patented in 1815, and bearing the name of "Blucher."

It was fifteen years after building his first engine, years crowded

with effort and further adventure, that the victory of Stephenson's life was won on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. The intervening period was, however, full of importance. Stephenson built a second engine in 1815, in which the connecting-rods were attached direct to crank-pins on the wheels. The Duke of Portland ordered one of his engines in 1817, for use on his Kilmarnock and Troon tramroad, but here the cast-iron tramplates were found too weak to carry any engine.

The owners of the Hetton Colliery decided in 1819 to alter their old horse tramroad into a locomotive line, and engaged Stephenson to lay out the line and build the engines. This was completed for opening on November 18th, 1822, when five of Stephenson's engines were working on the system.

Up to this stage locomotives were still confined to private colliery lines, but the Stockton & Darlington *public* railway project proved a turning point in Stephenson's career, and in locomotive history. Stephenson was appointed engineer, and application was made to Parliament for powers in 1818, but twice the Bill was rejected, being eventually passed in 1821. This, the first public railway in the world, was opened for traffic on Tuesday, September 27th, 1825, and the only engine possessed by the company when the first train steamed out bore the name "Locomotion." Handbills announcing this novel service of steam carriages depicted "Locomotion" as "The Company's Locomotive Engine and the Engine's Tender." The total weight of this first publicly used engine and tender was eight tons, and her full dimensions will always be a matter of interest to enginemmen. They were as follow :—

Cylinders, 10 inches diameter ; stroke, 24 inches ; wheels, 4 feet diameter ; boiler, 10 feet in length, 4 feet diameter ; boiler pressure, 25 lbs. to square inch ; weight of engine without tender, 6½ tons. She worked on the Stockton & Darlington line from September 27th, 1825, to 1841, and is still in working order and capable of being put in steam. It remains on a pedestal at the entrance to North Road Station, Darlington. At the opening of the Middlesbrough & Redcar Railway, this engine headed the procession, and

it was taken from its pedestal to work on the Darlington section of the North Eastern Railway at the Stockton and Darlington Jubilee in 1875. The following year it went to the Philadelphia Exhibition, and ran for the Stephenson Centenary in 1881. Her show career also included the Liverpool Exhibition of 1886, and the Paris Exhibition of 1889. Stephenson erected three similar engines for the Stockton & Darlington Railway; their "No. 5" was supplied by Messrs. Gilkes, Wilson & Co., of Leeds, and "No. 6" was Stephenson's engine, "Experiment," having six coupled wheels and outside inclined cylinders. Messrs. Stephenson & Co. built in 1827 an engine named "Twin Sisters," employed as a ballast engine on the construction of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. It had twin boilers and two tall chimneys, with two blast pipes. In 1828, Stephenson & Co. built a four-wheeled coupled engine, named "The Lancashire Witch," for the Bolton & Leigh Railway, with cylinders outside and inclined. This engine hauled 58 tons up a gradient of 1 in 432 at nearly nine miles an hour, and worked traffic for several years. To Messrs. Foster, Rastrick & Co., of Stourbridge, belongs the honour of building the first locomotive ever tried on rails in America. This engine, "Stourbridge Lion," was one of two built in 1829, and when it was tried on a short section of local line in America, in 1830, it caused a great sensation, people gathering from considerable distances to see the trial of this strange British steam engine.

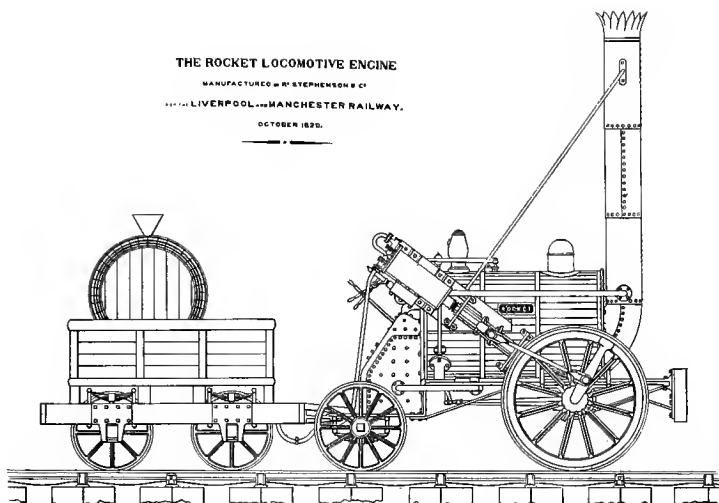
We have seen so far the first locomotives built and proved worthy, we have seen the opening of the world's first public railway, and the emergence of George Stephenson to fame as a pioneer of locomotive construction. We now come to a conspicuous success of his career, the romantic way in which he scored at the opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, which has been truly designated as the Grand British Experimental Railway. The structure and opening of this line was mooted in 1829, and the question how to work the projected line naturally came before the directors—should they rely upon horses, fixed engines and ropes, or the new locomotives. They preferred the last named, and one

THE ROCKET LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE

MANUFACTURED BY R. STEPHENSON & CO.

FOR THE LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY.

OCTOBER 1825.



ROBERT STEPHENSON & CO., ENGINEERS,
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

1829.



"The Great Bear," Great Western Railway, 1920.

of their number, Mr. Harrison, proposed that a reward be publicly offered for the most likely method of achieving their object. They decided to that effect on April 20th, 1829, and on April 25th appeared the announcement of a premium of £500 offered for the best locomotive engine, subject to eight conditions as to weight, load, pressure of steam, price, and speed.

The public trials of competing engines took place on the Manchester side of Rainhill Bridge, upon a level portion of line, from October 8th to 14th, 1829. Those entered were :—

The Rocket	-	-	George Stephenson.
The Novelty	-	-	Braithwaite & Erickson.
The Sans Pareil	-		Hackworth.
The Perseverance			Burstall.

The tests conclusively proved "The Rocket" to be the best engine, meeting all the conditions laid down and performing all tests in a more than satisfactory manner. "The Novelty" and "Sans Pareil" broke down, and "Perseverance," an engine designed for road work as well, was withdrawn. To George Stephenson was awarded the prize of £500, and it may be said that at Rainhill, in 1829, Stephenson proved the locomotive to be a practical proposition, and laid the foundation of the railways of the world.

"The Rocket," in working trim, without tender, weighed 4 tons 5 cwts., and her dimensions were :—Cylinders, 8 ins. diameter ; stroke, $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; driving wheels, 4 feet $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; boiler, 6 feet long, 3 feet 4 inches diameter ; pressure of steam in boiler, 50 lbs. per square inch ; firebox, 2 feet long, 3 feet broad by 3 feet deep ; tubes, 25 of 3 inches diameter ; area of fire grate, 6 square feet ; weight of loaded tender, 3 tons 4 cwts. The maximum speed attained by "The Rocket" at the Rainhill trials was 29 miles an hour. To take the test she was conveyed by road to Carlisle, and thence by water to the Mersey.

"The Rocket" is preserved in the South Kensington Museum, and has been described as consisting of "a boiler, a stove, a space, and a bench." At the conclusion of the trials, Stephenson received

orders to build seven other engines to be ready for the opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. These, constructed in 1830, were "Meteor," "Comet," "Arrow," "Dart," "Phoenix," "North Star," and "Northumbrian," all "outside" cylinder engines. When the line was opened on September 15th, these eight engines drew trains containing about 600 people in procession from Liverpool in the following order :—

The Northumbrian, driven by George Stephenson.		
Phoenix	„	Robert Stephenson.
North Star	„	Robert Stephenson (brother of George).
Rocket	„	Joseph Locke.
Dart	„	T. C. Gooch.
Comet	„	William Allcard.
Arrow	„	F. Swanwick.
Meteor	„	Anthony Harding.

It was at this triumphal opening that Mr. Huskisson was knocked down and run over by "The Rocket" at Parkside, and George Stephenson ran the dying man fifteen miles in 25 minutes, a speed of 36 miles an hour, on "The Northumbrian," to Eccles Hospital. Mr. Huskisson was a member for Liverpool, and had rendered great service in getting the Bill through Parliament. He had just stepped aside to speak to the Duke of Wellington, who was on the train, when he was knocked down. A monument at Parkside, 17 miles from Liverpool, marks the spot. On the following day the regular traffic of the line commenced, and "The Northumbrian" conveyed a train of 130 people from Lime Street, Liverpool, to Manchester (Liverpool Road Station), a distance of 30 miles 53 chains, in one hour and 50 minutes. The reader may recall how John Ridd, the hero in "Lorna Doone," thought it was tempting Providence when stage coaches began to run at twelve miles an hour. When "The Rocket" made 36 miles a world's record in speed was attained.

"The Planet," tried for the first time on December 4th, 1830,

was a striking improvement on its predecessors. It drew a train of passengers and coaches weighing 76 tons inclusive from Liverpool to Manchester in 2 hours and 39 minutes !

The standard rail gauge of 4 feet 8½ inches had been fixed before Stephenson began as engineer, but he approved it as a safe and reasonable gauge, and maintained it on the Stockton & Darlington, Liverpool & Manchester, Canterbury & Whitstable, and Leicester & Swannington railways. "They may be a long way apart now," he said, "but depend upon it they will be joined together some day."

The first bogey engine was built by Messrs. Carmichael & Co., Dundee, "The Earl of Airlie," which commenced work on the Dundee & Newtyle Railway, September, 1833, and ran until 1850.

The early railway tickets were metal discs, which the passenger received at one station and gave up for further use when he alighted.

The Canterbury & Whitstable Railway referred to was opened on May 3rd, 1830, the first train being drawn by the company's only locomotive, "Invicta," built by Stephenson & Co. This engine is preserved at the Ashford Works of the South Eastern Railway Company.

One of the early tests of "The Planet" was on December 4th, 1830, conveying a special train of voters from Manchester to Liverpool for an election. "The time of setting out was delayed," says the official report, "rendering it necessary to use extraordinary dispatch," and the journey was performed in sixty minutes, including a stop of two minutes for water. No. 11 engine, "Mercury," was delivered by Stephenson in December, 1830, of a considerably improved pattern and better appearance. It was of bigger dimensions and weighed thirteen tons, and it was followed in January, 1831, by two "goods" engines "of extraordinary power," and aptly named "Samson" and "Goliath." The former, in February, "accomplished the great feat" of drawing 164 tons, exclusive of engine and tender, from Liverpool to Manchester in 2½ hours ! Stephenson built an engine of the same class to go to America (Hudson & Mohawk Railway) in 1831, and he named it "John Bull."

In the same year the Glasgow and Garnskirk Railway was opened, and George Stephenson drove the first engine, bearing his own name and built at his Newcastle works. In May of 1832 came the Leicester & Swannington Railway, referred to at the opening of this chapter, and Stephenson drove "The Comet," accompanied by his son and the regular driver, Robert Weatherburn. The chimney stood thirteen feet high from the rail level, but on the opening day it was knocked down in the Glenfield tunnel, being then reduced to 12 feet 6 inches. Other firms were busy constructing engines for the various lines now established, but they did not have the consistent success of Stephenson. He gradually developed to the six-wheeled type, and extended to the horizontal shape and shorter funnel, a notable example being "Atlas No. 8," issued in February, 1834, for the Leicester & Swannington Railway. Its weight was 20 tons, and pressure of steam 70 lbs. It was of a type afterwards very largely employed; it worked faithfully for 25 years, and became the property of the Midland Railway when they took over the Leicester & Swannington.

The Newcastle to Carlisle Railway was opened on March 9th, 1835, with the "Comet," built by Messrs. Hawthorne & Co., of Newcastle.

The locomotive of to-day is not the invention of any one man. Hundreds of able engineers and draughtsmen have improved it step by step since 1825, and many controversies have turned around every section of its structure. Failures contributed as vitally as successes in those early days to show the way. The opening of the Great Western Railway (broad gauge) in 1837 opened "The battle of the gauges," which continued for fifteen years afterwards, and the rivalry itself assisted the development of the engine. Messrs. Brunel & Gooch placed engines on that line having driving wheels eight feet in diameter and in 1837-8 Mr. Brunel designed, and Messrs. Hawthorne constructed, the "Hurricane," having a pair of ten feet wheels, the largest wheels ever made. William Howe, in 1843, invented the well-known "link-motion" valve gear, which became generally adopted for locomotives.

The Midland Counties Railway was opened in 1840, and Thomas West Smith, one of our early members previously referred to, was stationed at Derby, working to Rugby and Nottingham. This Company, with the North Midland, became the Midland Railway Company in 1844, and Smith, taken over with all his colleagues and the rolling stock, worked a train to Leeds (Hunslet), Birmingham, and Lincoln. Smith, in 55 years' life on the line, drove some two million miles—85 times round the globe—and never met with an accident until knocked out just before his retirement.

George Stephenson, speaking at the opening of the Newcastle & Darlington Railway in 1844, said :—

“ I got leave to go from Killingworth to lay down a railway at Hetton, and next to Darlington, and after that I went to Liverpool to plan the line to Manchester. I there pledged myself to attain a speed of ten miles an hour. I said I had no doubt the engine would go much faster, but we had better be moderate at the beginning. The directors said I was quite right, for if when they came to Parliament I talked of going at a greater rate than ten miles an hour, I would put a cross on the concern. It was not an easy task for me to keep engines down to ten miles an hour, but it must be done, and I did my best. I had to place myself in the most unpleasant of all situations, the witness-box of a Parliamentary Committee. Someone inquired if I was a foreigner, and another hinted that I was mad. Many became alarmed at this “ Watt run wild,” and in order to prevent these mad steam engines running beyond an old horse trot, they got two eminent engineers to act as Lunacy Commissioners. These gentlemen proved it was practically and commercially inexpedient. I put up with insult and rebuff, and went on with my plans, determined not to be put down. Improvements were made every day, and to-day a train has brought me from London in the morning and enabled me to take my place in this room.”

CHAPTER II

Rapid Developments—The Railway Companies—Speed and Efficiency—The Railway Mania—War of Companies—An Engine Arrested—Bad Conditions of Service—North Eastern Drivers—The First Societies.

THAT short speech of Stephenson's conveys an idea of the enormous amount of prejudice and opposition he and others had to overcome. It also indicates the phenomenal advance of railways in that remarkable period 1825-45. Railway Company projects were launched in rapid succession, and there was keen speculation in the new method of transport. "Trade follows the engine" was a true saying, and towns, colliery owners, rich manufacturers, and all the money interests of the great centres, wanted a hand in railways. So did thousands of country squires, and they got it by keen resistance to tracks being laid through their land. They rooked the new companies for enormous prices for the requisite strip of land, and took toll for damages for disturbance, for noise, for nerve and shock if these monsters came thundering by, and for every sort of pretext. All this called for excessively high capital, and the Companies have ever since carried the burden of the exploiting that took place then. There is hardly a more interesting subject in railway development than this of the grabbing of heavy compensation, but I am unable to pursue it. I am, indeed, engaged on the one task more interesting, that of the welfare of the human element on the great railway service.

Stephenson, father of drivers, became an extensive locomotive

manufacturer, a railway contractor, a colliery and ironworks owner, particularly at Clay Cross. "I am now called George Stephenson, Esq., of Tapton House, near Chesterfield," he once said. "I have dined with princes, peers, and commoners, with persons of all classes from the humblest to the highest; I have dined off a red herring in the hedge bottom, and I have gone through immense drudgery, and the conclusion I have come to is that when we are all stripped there is not much difference."

He was unremitting to the end in his practical interest in the physical and mental welfare of his men, a worthy founder of a great calling.

All this time, however, the broad and narrow gauge controversy continued, and engines of great capacity were built as "ultimatums" to prove that they could do things which could not be done on the other gauge. For example, in 1853 the Bristol & Exeter Railway had some broad gauge tank-engines with wheels of nine feet diameter, which ran at eighty miles an hour. But the battle went in favour of the 4 feet 8½ inch gauge, and the Caledonian and the Great Northern each designed their fastest engines to suit that gauge. Train speed was a great cult seventy years ago, and by 1854 speeds were attained which were unbeaten in the great speed races to the North which were such a feature of competition in the '80's.

On the design of Mr. M. Kirtley, the Midland Railway led the way in 1852 with what was then a very large class of express engine, with driving wheels of 6 feet 6 inches, and cylinders 16 by 22 inches. Six were constructed by Messrs. R. Stephenson & Co., having no flanges on the driving wheels. In 1864 twenty engines of still greater power and size were built, having a working steam pressure of 140 lbs. Greater power and greater economy in fuel and running costs were aimed at all through the chapter of progress, until the twentieth century express engine represents the acme of steam engines. Changes during the last ten years have been minute compared to the strides of 1840 to 1850, and anything at all comparable could only come by a change to some other motive power. There is considerable difference of design in the engines on the

various lines, and there are many types of engines on the same system all constructed to serve particular needs and purposes.

As to the speed of trains, I have mentioned 80 miles an hour being exceeded, and on several occasions 78 miles or more has been recorded. On certain favourable lengths of line, speeds of 70, 73 and 75 miles an hour are often made, but such speeds involve needless risk, and are to be deprecated. Europe's fastest trains have a sort of understood maximum of sixty miles an hour. Drivers need nerves of warriors to bear the strain of ever increasing power and weight whilst maintaining speed. There was keen zest about railway races in 1885 to 1888, when they came to an end. The G.N. East Coast express left King's Cross at 10 a.m. on August 31st of 1888, and arrived at Edinburgh at 5.27 p.m., having taken the 400 miles in 7 hours and 27 minutes. On the following day racing to the North was discontinued. But forty years earlier, on May 11th of 1848, the Bristol express, G.W.R., ran from Paddington to Didcot, 53½ miles, in a running time of 47 minutes from start to stop, an average of 68 miles an hour, with J. Almond as driver.

The block system of signalling, invented by Mr. (afterwards Sir) William F. Cooke, and established in 1865, made a greatly needed improvement in railway working, contributing enormously to the safety of travelling and the confidence of drivers. I have already indicated how rapidly speed developed from Stephenson's modest guarantee of ten miles an hour up to seventy miles an hour within twenty years, and all this was taking perceptible effect in public life. It made possible the great success of the Exhibition in 1851, when more provincials visited London than in any year up to that time. It made possible also the cheap excursion to distant places, one of the priceless boons that railways presented to the nation's workers. It gave suddenly a new perquisite to health, education and entertainment. With excursions one naturally links the name of Cook. Thomas Cook was born at Melbourne, Derbyshire, on November 22nd, 1808, and at the age of ten years was earning a penny a day at gardening. His first organised cheap trip was to convey a Sunday School party from Leicester to



KEY TO THE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE "CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER, 1866."

1. W. Baker, Secy. & Treas.	4. M. T. Green, Acton	37. M. J. Kennedy, Bow	40. M. J. Thompson, Chairman C.C.	53. M. J. Prosser, Doncaster
2. W. Baker, Manchester	5. T. Hughes, Aschfield	38. J. Middleton, Birmingham	41. J. Farnick, Rhye Cross	54. J. Robinson, Middlesbrough
3. J. Arnold, Ipswich Town	6. J. Hulse, Exeter	39. E. Bailey, Fuddington	42. M. Horner, New Cross	55. A. Davis, Wolverhampton
4. A. Carter, Ipswich	7. D. Hordenden, Haverham	40. J. Lang, Leeds	43. J. Stone, Lancaster	56. R. Wright, Worcester
5. H. Turner, H. Hingham	8. G. Butler, New England	41. J. O. Patten, Sec. C.C.	44. E. Bart, Bristol	57. J. Hall, Barrow-in-Furness
6. C. Smiley, Finsbury	9. W. Pickett, Stratford	42. J. Price, Orms	45. J. Urson, Gloucester	58. J. Slater, Brighton
7. R. Bailey, New England	10. J. Tomlin, Rugby	43. J. Young, Gainshead	46. R. Edson, Treasurer of the Society	59. W. Head, Northampton
8. J. Foster, Newcastle	11. E. Johnson, Weymouth	44. E. Edwards, Manager of The Press	47. J. Dixon, Swansea	60. S. Leary, Loughborough
9. J. Arnold, Ipswich	12. E. Rogers, Dorkinghead	45. J. Hall, Preston	48. W. Jones, Cardiff	61. J. Thorne, York
10. M. Clarke, New England	13. W. Patterson, Maiden	46. J. Tuckley, Rufford	49. Conference Reporter	62. R. Bulman, Hull
11. D. Bates, Ipswich	14. R. Frost, Chester	47. C. East, Sunderland	50. M. G. Birchall, Derby	63. W. Rowell, Carmarthen
12. J. Arnold, Ipswich	15. D. Boucher, Maccles	48. E. Pringle, Bolton	51. J. Bromfield, Battersea	64. J. Williams, Amherst
13. J. G. Carter, Ipswich	16. G. Parkinson, New England	49. J. Taylor, Warrington	52. L. Higgs, Swanton	65. W. Bull, Swanton

The First Conference of Locomotive Workers, November, 1866.
The Engine Drivers' and Firemen's United Society.

Loughborough in July, 1841. The return fare was a shilling, and 570 people bought tickets for this reserved train.

A band of music preceded the great party to the station, and at Loughborough the inhabitants turned out to witness the arrival of the "excursion." The idea paid the Company, paid Cook, and paid everybody concerned. Cook was pressed to organise more such, and did so cheerfully. He ran one from Rugby to Derby (100 miles return) for a shilling; sixpence for children, and a series of such popular trips were very successful. At first Cook was very diffident about big and costly enterprises, but gradually he extended his scope. In 1845 he ventured a trip from Derby to Liverpool, with crossings to the Isle of Man, Dublin, and the Welsh coast, 500 miles for 14s. It was so successful that he repeated it two weeks later. Next he ran 800 miles enterprises into Scotland for a guinea, and by 1850 he had contracts with all the great railway companies. He chartered steamships and Continental hotels, and his name became a guarantee for the safety and comfort of passengers. In 1866 he ran his first excursion to America, and shrank at nothing in the way of enterprise.

The completion of railways made most elaborate and efficient postal facilities possible, with mail vans for sorting en route, and with prompt delivery to every part of the kingdom. It transformed life at the fishing ports, whose salesmen were enabled to charter special express trains of fish vans to convey the catch fresh to London and other large centres. It transferred coal and iron-ore with rapidity from the mines to the industrial centres, and gave such a lift to commerce as cannot be calculated.

The coming of railways made a veritable transition in England, but in their coming they involved a mighty scramble for gain, a perfect fever of speculation in railway shares, and such a spirit of astute competition and jockeying for places as can only be imagined after reading much of the evidence. From 1830 to 1840 a countless number of small lines were projected and built, mostly proving very remunerative. A list of the titles would be a very formidable catalogue. Some very short lines had very long names, and local

citizens were proud to hold railway "interests." From 1840 to 1850 was a time of absorption by bigger concerns, of re-fashioning and connecting up, and this process again involved keen competition, ways weird and devious, and many appeals to Parliamentary Committees. A railway mania had seized those with money to spare, and quite a fevered gambling took place. In one year, 1846, 272 Acts were passed for new lines. At that time there were several Midland Companies—the Midland Counties, the North Midland, the West Midland—all later absorbed in the Midland. There were two North Westerns—the London & North Western and the "Little" North Western. The competition for towns and routes was of a bitter and remorseless character, and contract work was rushed. On one stretch of the Derby to Nottingham line 3,500 men and 328 horses were working full speed, and by June, 1838, 4,000 men were working on the laying of that line, which was opened on May 30th, 1839, amid the pealing of bells. The extension up the Erewash Valley from Trent to Chesterfield caused great heartburning between companies, and the countryside near Clay Cross was lit up at night by the camp fires of thousands of navvies and platelayers.

It was in 1835 that George Stephenson and his secretary set out in a stage coach from Derby to drive to Leeds, to find the best route for a railway line. He spent a long time over that rugged journey of 72 miles, walking into the fields, examining geological formations, and finding alternative routes. He had the valleys of the Derwent, Amber, Rother, Don, Dearne, Calder, and Aire to negotiate, and he had the option of taking a high and costly route by Sheffield, Barnsley and Wakefield. This involved enormous costs in earth-works, owing to bad gradients, and Stephenson preferred to keep east of them, to connect them by branches. His advice was taken, after much discussion, and this North Midland, as it was called, was always a favourite line of his.

The same search and survey for routes, the same laying of tracks and sites for goods and passenger stations, was proceeding in every part of Great Britain. At every point of the compass were railway

enterprises, and the London & North Western and Great Northern had already linked up London with the industrial North, while the Great Western ran in from the West. For some years the Midland Company, after it extended from Bedford to Leeds, used King's Cross Station for their passenger work, but by 1853 that marvellous structure, St. Pancras, was in course of preparation. The M.S. & L. and the G.N.R. seriously affected Midland passenger traffic from 1845 to 1850. Landed interests imposed every sort of difficulty. Surveying engineers were charged with trespassing, even with poaching, and agents and keepers were put on to watch the game. The Duke of Devonshire demanded that any line through his estate should go through a covered way! The Duke of Rutland demanded that not a tree should be lopped or removed, thus causing a nice calculation. To suit the two dukes two stations had to be built—Bakewell and Hassop—and all kinds of concessions had to be made to other landowners.

Every hand was for itself against the great public, which has had to pay ever since. Companies fought each other, and made compacts with each other against a third. The Lancashire & Yorkshire, the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincoln, and the London & North Western, made an agreement in 1850 to keep the Midland out of Manchester. Vested interests fought each other for monopoly of towns and routes all over the country, in order to collect toll on traffic into those centres. By the year 1849 there were railways touching 3,000 parishes, in which the rates levied were £800,000—less than some of our single cities to-day—and of this sum railways paid £250,000.

The Midland Company, in the year 1852, came within $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of terms with the London & North Western for joint running into Euston, but they decided to buy out St. Pancras, for which 3,000 houses were removed. The Leeds & Bradford line furnishes a good example of a local line absorbed. The Midland had paid an annual rental of £90,000, which on May 12th, 1852, was commuted by £1,800,000 in 18,000 shares of £100 each, at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for five years, and afterwards "four per cent. in perpetuity." Such

dividends are still being paid in great sums all over England.

A bright instance of competition and what it led to is furnished by an incident at Nottingham Midland Station in August of 1852. The Great Northern had a running arrangement with another company, which in turn had running rights over the Midland into Nottingham. On the day referred to a G.N. engine ran the train of passengers into Nottingham. The trespasser was a conspicuous object in the station, and it was promptly captured. The process used was like that for capturing wild elephants, by putting others of its kind around it. Midland engines were called out and placed before and behind, and the prisoner was piloted to the yard !

Let us look at an example or two of the obstinacy and exploitation that was displayed. There was, for example, a clause in the Act for the Liverpool & Manchester Railway which said : " No steam engine shall be set up in the township of Burtonwood or Winwick, and no locomotive shall be allowed to pass along the line within those townships which shall be considered by Thomas, Lord Lilford, or by the Rector of Winwick, to be a nuisance or annoyance to them from the smoke and noise thereof." One landowner got £3,000 for a plot of land through which a line was to pass, and £10,000 for " consequential damages " on the coming of this great herald of commerce and prosperity. The Great Eastern had to pay £120,000 for a site which had been valued as worth £5,000. Railway lines were costly affairs. The track of the Brighton Company worked out at £8,000 per mile, the London to Birmingham at £6,300, and the Great Western at £6,696. The law was just as bad as the land. The legal costs involved in an abandoned and rejected scheme came to £82,000, and it was said that one barrister netted £38,000 in a single session of Parliament.

Stage coach owners found it unprofitable to carry the mails, and so disorganised delivery and opposed the new rival to their business. Canal companies had been paying tremendously high dividends, and shares in them stood at 20 to 40 times their normal value. The canal companies were therefore remorseless opponents of the swifter iron roads. Capitalist interests fought each other,

and an investing public was scrambling to get money on all sorts of wild railway enterprises. A smash came in October of 1845, when there were 47 completed lines, 118 being constructed, and 1,263 being projected. Under a later Act to facilitate the abandonment of railway bubble schemes, 1,560 miles of designed routes were abandoned. By the year 1864 thirteen large companies monopolised about three-quarters of the railway traffic of the kingdom. The Great Eastern had taken over or leased 26; the Great Western, 115; the London & North Western, 59; the Midland Railway, 35; and the North Eastern, 41. Big business was getting hold of the railways, big money was being made by all the interests concerned, except one, the most vital interest of all, human labour. It was regarded as a mere chattel, to be purchased as cheaply as possible and worked as heavily as possible, as we shall see later. Most companies had some regard for their horses, but they had none for their men.

In 1852 very important correspondence had taken place between the Midland and London & North Western, and the Great Northern and Midland, with a view to amalgamating all three railways into one national system. The North Western was the world's biggest corporation, a gigantic undertaking, as big as the other two combined then, and it is interesting to recall that chairmen and secretaries in those letters in 1852 recognised their competition was wasteful. They were running two tracks and two depots in one town, and in general duplicating all the expense of structure and maintenance. It would be in the national interest, they said, to design one cohesive system and pool their interests. But Parliament proved hostile to the project of amalgamation.

The period 1860 to 1870 saw a steadying of the feverish cult of railways. There were scores of companies possessing running powers, and any part of Great Britain could be crossed in a day. They "carried Scotsmen to London by the light of a winter's day," as Macaulay said, and coaching houses and famous hostelrys became forgotten. The sound of the horn became a novelty on the roads, but everywhere was the whistle of steam power. Thousands

of engines were in daily service, and a very large staff of badly-paid and overworked railwaymen were at work. More and more men became familiar with the vibrating "dither" of footplates rattling along at high speed, with everything hard and hot about them. They got used to handling boilers of 400 or 500 gallons of boiling water close to them, and to feeding a flaring cauldron of five to ten cwts. of coal roaring like a furnace. They knew what it was to see smoke-box doors and wheel guards get red hot.

In those early days drivers and firemen were not so protected as they are now from the full force of the wind and the keen night air of winter. They would get half blinded with dust, and knew what it was to have warm feet and ears piercingly cold :—

To bear
The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
With half shut eyes, and puckered cheeks and teeth
Presented bare against the storm.

Time-tables had become familiar to the public (Bradshaw's being first published in 1841), water tanks had been put down, Metropolitan railways were running, St. Pancras had been opened (October 1st, 1868), and every month of every year seemed marked by some new development. Modest attempts had been made to organise the men, but without success. The Railway Working Man's Provident Benefit Society was started in 1865 amongst the guards on the Great Western Railway, by Charles Bassett-Vincent, but two years later it was completely smashed by wholesale dismissals of its prominent members. On the North Eastern Railway—and this is a very interesting matter—an Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Society was started at the same time, but it also was broken up after an unsuccessful strike. Railways had been developing for a whole generation, and were employing whole armies of men, before Trade Unionism took root amongst them. Their widely different vocations, the many grades of railway service, and the scattered nature of this large army over every point of the country, all hampered that spirit of cohesion needed.

We have seen how on the North Eastern, in 1865, a Drivers' and Firemen's Society was started. It began in spontaneous enthusiasm, but it abruptly ended for want of discretion. Far too soon, and without adequate reserves, it launched a strike for better conditions, and was broken up in the failure that resulted. The spirit was there, however, and in the following year, 1866, an Engine Drivers' and Firemen's United Society was established, its objects being to assure friendly society benefits for its members. Later it fully realised that self pity and mutual help were not sufficient to move railway conditions, and it became much more militant in spirit than its rules indicated. Therefore, we have it on record that in both 1865 and 1866 it was the drivers and firemen who led the way towards organisation, and after an interlude of 14 years came together again as leaders of the way, despite opposition, suppression and victimisation, under the banner of the Associated Society.

There were a quarter of a million men engaged on the railways when, in 1871, Mr. Michael Bass, M.P. for Derby, began to interest himself on behalf of the very ill-paid and heavily-worked railwaymen. His exertions resulted in the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, and he gave it an impetus by the disclosures at an inquiry which he set up into conditions of service. The hours especially were excessive, many cases of a 90 hours week being reported, and twenty hours and more of continuous duty were often worked. In researching for purposes of this history, I came across many cases of a most depressing character. A driver was killed on Kentish Town Station for want of energy to get out of the way of a light engine, and it transpired at the inquest that he was worn out by 23 hours of continuous work on the footplate. There was need, heaven knows, to end the slavery inflicted in Scotland, what time companies were returning seven per cent. interest on their inflated capital. I propose to discuss these appalling conditions more fully in a later chapter, as it is important, for our young members especially, to fully realise what railway service was like in the half century 1850 to 1900.

For purposes of the moment we have reached the formation of the A.S.R.S., March 2nd, 1872, which proceeded under the piloting care of Michael Bass, and devoted its attention chiefly to hours and accidents, both very urgent matters certainly. It had a long list of patrons and presidents, none of whom were working men, and all its operations were confined to the old type of friendly society. In 1872 it claimed to have 17,247 members out of 250,000 employees, but this membership steadily declined, until in 1882 it had only a scattered and very ineffective membership of 6,321. One of the inherent weaknesses, limiting the scope of action, was, without any question, the all grades composition. In 1882 not two per cent. of the railwaymen were organised, although the Scottish Society of Railway Servants had been established, and the United Pointsmen and Signalmen's Society (1880) had come along, and our own Society was in its vigorous infancy. It was not until 1889 that the General Railway Workers' Union was formed. The A.S.R.S. waited on Members of Parliament, and ventured into the lobby for interviews. The breathless idea that the working people might send representatives through the lobby to take seats in the House itself had not then dawned.

The decade of the seventies had been an atrociously hard time for railwaymen. There had been many fatalities and accidents to men and boys in the service, and all were "wage slaves" in a real and grim sense. The system that brought vastly increased wealth to commerce, banks, mines, and all financial interests, was only a durance vile for the men who ran the system. Something was about to happen to break the suppression, and the great venture was launched by the drivers and firemen. Seven men of Monmouthshire, stirred by the arbitrary attitude of the Great Western, breathed the great inspiration. The same project was being confidentially whispered at Birmingham, Sheffield, Bristol, and Leeds, and in 1880 it broke out spontaneously under the letters A.S.L.E. & F.

York Place
Giffethstown
9th February 1880

Mr. William Ulliyott

My dear Sir

Your letter of 5th inst. to Mr. E. Evans was handed me on 8th inst. with directions from our Committee to answer it; I am sorry it could not have been done before. as all letters have to be laid before the Com. trusting this explanation of our seeming negligence will be satisfactory. You will allow me in the name of our men to congratulate you on your energy, and I may hope your complete success, in the formation of a Branch, and at the same time to inform you that the M. & S. men are the first founders, of the Society. Mr. Evans, has doubtless explained to you the cause, of us conceiving and proposing the Society, although our men at this station, had agreed to it, we have not opened a Lodge here, until next Sunday the 15th inst. The reasons for not doing so are as follows.

Birmingham about the same time with our proposal, proposed a "National Union", we having no wish to divide the men, and Bristol being the centre of our agitation against the Obnoxious Circular of Mr. Dean we waived our claim, as the Head of the Movement, in favour of Bristol, and requested their Com^{tee} to call a general meeting of Delegates to consider the various propositions which had emanated from the different Stations. for the last month. or six weeks, we have been waiting an answer, but Bristol delegate being unwell they did not answer until last week, asking us to arrange with Birmingham, our loyalty to Bristol as the Head of the Movement. thus prevented us from opening a Lodge, so that your men have the honour of being the first members we feel no jealousy on the matter, but heartily congratulate you. in the mean time we have not been idle, some of our

men have been attending meetings of the Massachusetts Railway at Newport and the L. & N.W. men at Abercromby, in both places we have been completely successful.

Bristol having abdicated, leaves us with our hands free, we have determined, as the originators of the movement, to test our proper place as the Head problem and in conjunction with the members of the various Lodges, frame Rules and a Constitution for the Society. we shall be pleased to receive any suggestions from you, which shall be placed before the delegates, (your own included) when we have organized the matter fully. As to the "National Union" it is only a proposition, the same as ours but they did not wait or ask any of the other Stations, but started on their own responsibility, I have been talking to several of them and all admit that our proposal is the best; but they say, "It was necessary something should be done, that is why we started it," "we have left the rules open, so that when there is a delegate meeting, if the majority of the ~~the~~ men think your proposal the best, we are willing to pay into it, I think there can be no question about that matter, when it comes to be reasoned over. The matter lies in a nutshell, we want a large sum of money to protect us, as Enginemen and Firemen, from the rapacity of our Employers and at once, we cannot afford to wait for 3 or 4 years, we must wait one year, the larger the sum we pay into it, the sooner will our position be impregnable, and once directors know that we are preparing in reality to defend ourselves. Superintendents will think twice before they turn the screw. we shall be pleased to receive any suggestions, and endeavour to meet your views, as we believe they are identical with our own, even if they are not they shall receive our earnest consideration as you deserve for your energy. Trusting the flame you have lighted in Sheffield may never be extinguished, and that soon Enginemen and Firemen may take their proper place in the front ranks of skilled labour believe me to be my dear Sir

Yours faithfully
Chas. H. Perry

of Sheffield, having reference to the formation of the Society.

CHAPTER III

Our Society—The A.S.R.S. and the Strike—The Change in 1880—Victimisation and Revolt—A Famous Letter—The First Branches—First Executive Meetings—Strike and Victimisation Pay.

PRIOR to 1880, apart from the North Eastern drivers' action the efforts of organised railwaymen had been confined to methods of appeal. So far as Parliament was concerned, Mr. Bass and a few friends acted as spokesmen, strictly within limits of course, and outside Parliament the scope of action was chiefly the scope of talk and persuasion. The strike weapon was officially rejected because it was feared, and at delegate meetings it was discussed and talked out. The assembly at Birmingham Delegate Meeting of the A.S.R.S. in October, 1877, illustrates the difficulty. An attendance of 130 delegates included 30 engine drivers, 20 goods guards, and signalmen, clerks, firemen, inspectors, porters, plate-layers, foremen, carmen, fitters, time-keepers, carpenters, blacksmiths, carriage washers, examiners, policemen, and gatemen. Was this a Trade Union? There was a lack of common understanding, because there was a lack of knowledge of each other's conditions, and meetings came and went without effect. There were, of course, those who advocated strike action, and it was discussed at Leeds in 1879, when the President declared he had never known arbitration to fail. An effective reply was made to this that it had never failed because it had never been tried, and the companies would not recognise them. The objects of the A.S.R.S. were stated to be "to improve the conditions of all classes of railway

servants by legitimate means ; to prevent strikes by promoting good understanding between employers and employed ; to obtain shorter hours, and more equitable payment for duty performed."

The companies, as may be imagined, were not disturbed by such pious expressions. In 1879 they imposed numerous reductions of wages because trade was described as bad, although they paid increased dividends. So much feeling was stirred in 1879 that the whole question of strike policy was re-committed to the branches, with the advice that "at the same time we are in favour of the principle of arbitration." The companies did not even deign to give an explanation of why they took the harsh course of increasing hours and reducing wages, and men chosen to represent their fellows on deputations were ruthlessly removed or dismissed from the service, and prevented from getting employment under other companies. Victimisation was therefore a very real and cruel thing. Powerful companies proved impersonal and callous, and recognised no moral obligations. The only outlook was material.

Mr. Fred W. Evans, the first effective General Secretary of the A.S.R.S., fully realised the gravity of the times, and in the circular issued to branches on the strike question, he wrote :—

"By renouncing our right to resist injustice by the resort to strikes we have disarmed in the face of the enemy, and invited him to inflict upon us the attack we have been anxious to avoid and he anxious to inflict. Strikes are justifiable when they constitute the workman's last and only means of asserting or defending his rights. . . . Like war, strikes may be both necessary and justifiable, and like war they demand organisation and sacrifice. As things now stand in the railway service the companies are all powerful, and the men are helpless, obliged to submit to any terms dictated by the companies, until the men possess the means and organisation to unitedly withhold their labour. If railwaymen are ever to be fairly treated, well paid, and not overworked, it will be when they rely on themselves, and use the means within their power to exact respect for their labour and its rights from their employers."

Honour where honour is due. There has never been a more courageous and dignified defence of the strike weapon than that written by Mr. Evans. The difficulty lay in moulding the opinion of his scattered and mixed membership. The proposal was to levy for a special strike fund, and it materially affected the character of the society. "If levied," said Mr. Evans, "it must be obligatory on each and everyone." It was proposed, as an inducement to halting members, to set aside any sum above £5,000 for pension benefits. The £5,000 strike fund was very small, but it would represent a more vigorous policy in the future, to fix a fair standard day's work of eight hours for every man, six days weekly, and Sunday work to count as overtime. The proposal, however, did not commend itself to members, and "The Times" rejoiced that "The A.S.R.S. will have nothing to do with strikes in any case." They were merely repeating the chairman of the Liverpool Conference in 1878. What was it caused the Committee to send out a special circular on May 21st of 1880? which said:—

"The Executive of the A.S.R.S. take this opportunity of assuring the members and railwaymen generally that after the annual meeting in October the A.S. will secure for them every possible protection that other societies profess to be provided for, and with greater advantage to them."

What caused it? It was the birth of the Associated, and the circular was the first note of that relentless opposition so long continued. By November of 1879 it was reported: "The G.W. drivers are forming a contingency fund, and there are signs that the drivers on other lines would gladly see some national fund established which would give to the men material as well as moral force in contention with the companies." The enginemen and firemen of the Midland district held a meeting on November 9th, 1879, and arrived at a determination to form a national union. There was discussion in several centres of a National Society for Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen, and, apprehensive of what actually happened, the E.C. of the A.S.R.S. "Resolved that a circular be

issued to branches, pointing out the effects and possible evil which may result from the successful establishment of a separate locomotive society having the same end in view as the A.S.R.S."

Taken generally, working hours had been increased from 60 to 66 per week, and "the fall in wages enabled the country once more to enter the world's markets at as low a price as foreign nations." The twelve hours day was common, and there was gratitude when the M.S. & L. reduced them to ten. Miners were toiling hard for 26s. weekly, getting 1s. 8d. per ton on coal to the pit mouth. In March of 1879 the following statement appeared in "The Railway Gazette" :—

"Men in the service are unwilling to be too prominent, they know the result. There is scarcely a branch secretary who would write to his company and demand the wages due to a member of his branch ; he fears the result to himself. It is not so in other trade unions."

In October of the same year Mr. Fred Evans wrote :—

"Excitement and discontent prevail among the whole locomotive staff of the G.W. Railway. Indeed, at no previous time have these feelings been so general as at this moment. Fostering the belief that Sir Daniel Gooch was the enginemen's friend, and confident of wages and hours agreed to in 1867 remaining unaltered under any circumstances, the G.W. drivers and firemen have been heedless of the numerous warnings that railway labour of every grade was threatened. Even when Mr. Dean issued his circular notifying a reduction of standard wages and increase of two hours in the day's work, to take effect from October 1st, the men consoled themselves by the assurance that the directors and Sir Daniel were ignorant of the matter. Like other impersonal concerns, the G.W. Board are without sympathy or regard for anything else than dividend. Nearly 2,000 men signed the petition backing up the deputation which waited upon the directors, and they refused to withdraw one single condition."

The G.N.R. had inflicted several dismissals, and all companies were doing their utmost to discourage orphan funds. Wages were reduced by 4s. to 6s. weekly; firemen receiving 3s. 6d. a day for twelve hours' service, which actually meant 14 to 16 hours; branch engine drivers received 5s. daily for twelve hours, third class goods men 5s. 6d., and higher classed drivers had sixpence an hour for main line work. Let us come now to the spirit prevailing amongst the men. A Protection Fund was mooted, to which drivers would contribute 1½d. weekly and firemen three-farthings. "Shame," said one, "it ought to have been as many shillings. We should be contributing five and six times as much to the company in lost wages. Mechanics, who get 32s. weekly, are paying one pound quarterly to their union." The G.W.R., the G.N.R., and the North Eastern had already convinced railwaymen of the necessity of a protection fund as well as friendly society benefits. The Taff Vale line was returning eleven per cent. profit and paying drivers 5d. to 7½d. an hour. Firemen and cleaners were sent out on seventy miles journeys with passenger trains, and several moves of this kind stung the men to action. In December of 1879 it had been resolved to form a National Society of Drivers and Firemen.

The real and visible life of the A.S.L.E. & F. as a motive force in the railway world begins with the following historic letter, which is framed and has a place of honour at the Head Office :—

YORK PLACE,

GRIFFITHSTOWN, NEWPORT,

February 9th, 1880.

Mr. William Ulllyott.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 5th instant to Mr. E. Evans was handed to me on the 8th instant, with directions from our committee to answer it. I am sorry it could not have been done before, as all letters have to be laid before the committee. Trusting this explanation of our seeming negligence will be satisfactory. You will allow me in the name of our men to congratulate you on

your energy, and I may hope your complete success, in the formation of a branch, and at the same time to inform you that the M. & S. men are the first founders of the Society. Mr. Evans has doubtless explained to you the cause of us conceiving and proposing the Society. Although our men at this station had agreed to it, we have not opened a lodge here until next Sunday, the 15th inst. The reasons for not doing so are as follows :—

Birmingham, about the same time with our proposal, proposed a “National Union.” We having no wish to divide the men, and Bristol being the centre of an agitation against the obnoxious circular of Mr. Dean, we waived our claim as the head of the movement in favour of Bristol, and requested their committee to call a general meeting of delegates to consider the various propositions which had emanated from the different stations. For the last month or six weeks we have been waiting for an answer, but Bristol delegate being unwell, they did not answer until last week, asking us to arrange with Birmingham. Our loyalty to Bristol as the head of the movement thus prevented us opening a lodge, so that your men have the honour of being the first members. We feel no jealousy on the matter, but heartily congratulate you. In the meantime we have not been idle, some of our men have been attending meetings of the Monmouthshire Railway at Newport, and the L. & N.W. men at Abergavenny. In both places we have been completely successful. Bristol having abdicated, leaves us with our hands free. We have determined, as the originators of the movement, to take our proper place as the head pro tem. and, in conjunction with the members of the various lodges, frame rules and a Constitution for the Society. We shall be pleased to receive any suggestions from you, which shall be placed before the delegates (your own included) when we have organised the matter fully, as to the National Union.

It is only a proposition, the same as ours, but they did not wait or ask any of the other stations, but started on their own

responsibility. I have been talking to several of them, and all admit that our proposal is the best, but they say "it was necessary something should be done, that is why we started it." We have left the rules open, so that when there is a delegate meeting, if the majority of the men think your proposal the best, we are willing to pay into it. I think there can be no question about that matter when it comes to be reasoned over. The matter lies in a nutshell—we want a large sum of money to protect us as enginemen and firemen from the rapacity of our employers, and at once. We cannot afford to wait three or four years, we must wait one year; the larger the sum we pay into it, the sooner will our position be impregnable, and once directors know that we are preparing in reality to defend ourselves, superintendents will think twice before they turn the screw. We shall be pleased to receive any suggestions, and endeavour to meet your views, as we believe they are identical with our own. Even if they are not the same they shall receive our earnest consideration, as you deserve for your energy. Trusting the flame you have lighted in Sheffield may never be extinguished, and that soon enginemen and firemen may take their proper place in the front rank of skilled labour.

Believe me to be, my dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES H. PERRY.

What a very worthy letter by Perry, of Newport, to Ullyott, of Sheffield, to form the foundation of a new Society. It is nicely couched, friendly in tone, and full of hopeful sentiment. These pioneers spent months in quiet branch building, exchanging views, framing basic rules, writing each other, and looking forward to the time when drivers and firemen would be fairly paid, and would be above the fear of dismissal for having dared to make a reasonable request. Delegate meetings were held, and national programmes—very modest things—were talked of in that year 1880. Branches of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen—the same name then as now, were started in 1880 at Sheffield,

Pontypool, Neath, Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford, Tondy, and Carnforth. They were indeed taking the only course to fling off slavery. During the same year the London & North Western had threatened to discharge men who held office in the inoffensive Amalgamated, and some members refused to be nominated as delegates to the A.G.M. for that reason. The new Associated Society was taking the correct line, and it caused the Amalgamated to end its talk of a Protection Fund and to act, for in October of 1880 provision was made for one. The resolution to that effect was moved and seconded by drivers, but by that time the Associated was on its feet.

For economy's sake, it was decided that the affairs of the Society should be conducted by a committee elected from the branch or branches in the town chosen as headquarters of the Society, and after consideration of the various towns in the movement, Leeds was chosen as the centre. Thus it happened that for the first few years the Leeds men controlled and administered the affairs of the Association, and did it very conscientiously. Rules had been framed, and a well-organised, although small, Society brought into existence by January of 1881, when the Leeds Branch was vested with directing authority. The first meeting of the new local committee was held on Sunday, March 6th, 1881, when there were present Joseph Brooke, George Rushforth, Henry Shuttleworth, Joseph Leech, George Bamforth, Charles Woodhead, Samuel Lester, Roger Hawksley, Benjamin Fielding, Samuel Holland, and Walter Arnold.

The first resolution carried was :—

“ That the poetry on the first page of the rules remain as at present, but that on first page of branch rules it be omitted.”

This referred to the Burns' quotation so familiar to all our members :—

“ If I'm yon haughty lordling's slave
By Nature's law designed,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind ?

If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn ?
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn ? ”

The first rule-book of the “ Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen ” was published to members in the year 1881 as “ Registered under the Trades’ Union Acts,” with registered office at the Commercial Inn, Sweet Street, Holbeck, Leeds. Its objects were specified in Rule 2 as follows :—

“ The objects of this Society shall be to form funds, by entrance fees and weekly contributions, for the relief of its members in sickness, incapacitation by old age or accident, from following their profession or calling, by paying a sum of money at death of members or their wives, and for the relief or maintenance of the members when on travel in search of employment, or when in distressed circumstances, and to advance the interests of its members in their various professions and callings by procuring a reduction in the excessive hours of labour, regulating the speed of trains, the adoption of modern improvements for the general safe working over all railways in the United Kingdom, and generally in such other manner and to such extent as the Executive Committee may determine.”

The Executive Committee consisted of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Three Trustees, General Treasurer, Secretary, and Seven Committee-men, who “ shall be elected from the branch or branches in the town or city where the head offices are situated, and shall elect their own chairman.”

Three auditors were to be chosen for the first year by the Executive Committee from the first three branches whose names shall appear on the books of the Society, and in each succeeding year by the three branches following next in rotation in such books.

The first executive was paid a sum of one shilling per meeting. They usually met on Sundays, and there are many records of these first committee-men sitting from 9.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., getting 1s.

for their attendance. If they were ten minutes late they forfeited this shilling, and in many cases the attendance is marked by a reference in brackets (Item —, Bro. ——— ten minutes late, no fee). Rule 9 provided :—

“The wages of each member of the Executive Committee shall be paid from the General Management Fund, and should it be deemed necessary, a sum not exceeding 4s. per diem expenses shall be paid to each member of the Executive Committee whilst engaged on the business of the Society, and the General Treasurer shall receive an additional sum of 10s. per quarter as salary. Members of the Executive Committee shall be fined 2s. each for non-attendance at a general meeting, unless a satisfactory apology is given.”

The rules as to funds of the Society also provided for a General Fund, a Pension Fund, a Management Fund, and a Protection Fund, in addition to a Branch Fund in the control of every branch committee. Thus the new Society had its Protection Fund established and registered several months before the A.S.R.S. decided at its October Conference, 1880, to add a Protection Fund. Particular importance attaches to this point in that it was the first case of a Trade Union providing for the event of a strike on the railways. Rule 22, “Protection and Legal Defence Fund,” contained the following points :—

“There shall be a fund for the protection of members from unjust treatment by any officials, from violation of any agreement by employers, or on account of any members taking an active part in any question relating to hours or wages, or any grievance which may arise in connection therewith, provided such member be so deputed by members of his branch ; also for providing legal assistance in all cases which are not criminal in themselves.”

“Should it be deemed necessary for the purposes of this Society to withdraw any number of members from their employment, they shall be paid a sum of 12s. per week each during such with-

drawal ; and a sum of 2s. per week for each child under 12 years of age during such time. In no case shall such withdrawal take place without the consent of four-fifths of the men (being members of the Society, employed on the railway system on which the dispute has arisen), and the consent of the Executive Committee, specially convened to consider such action, first obtained."

"Any member being discharged for having taken any active part in any question relating to hours and wages, he having been duly appointed by his branch to do so, shall receive the sum of £100, and 15s. per week whilst seeking re-employment."

This was a very courageous provision for strikes and victimisation for a small Society to make in its first days. As will be seen, the grant of £100 had to be made in many cases of dismissal of men serving on deputations.

CHAPTER IV

Launching Out—Drivers' Need for Protection—The Tay Bridge
Exposure—A Driver in Handcuffs—Severity of Companies—
The Clarion Call—Help Yourselves.

IN this and the succeeding chapter we shall trace together the years 1880 to 1885—years of slow progress, of foundation building, and of endurance in the buffeting of storms. The rule-books were no sooner out and the Society launched than hostile criticism about sectionalism made itself felt. An ample Protection Fund was a big and courageous thing to bid for, and a lively controversy at once arose in the "Gazette," and other service journals, about the "danger" and the "evil" of such a Society. Then, too, the Tay Bridge disaster of December, 1879, loomed large, and there were other ominous signs in the railway world. When the Great Western men decided to "resist to the utmost" the proposed reduction of wages and increase of hours, five of them wrote an assurance at once that they didn't mean it, they certainly did not mean a strike, nor membership with the new Society which promoted a Protection Fund. A statement was issued in "The Railway Service Gazette" by the committee of the proposed Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen's National Union, which gave point to this controversy, and excited the interest of footplate workers. As it is almost the earliest public intimation of the coming of the new spirit, I reproduce it here in full:—

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEMEN AND FIREMEN'S
NATIONAL UNION.

COMMITTEE ROOM, "DUKE OF YORK,"

DOE STREET, BIRMINGHAM,

December 23rd, 1879.

To the Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen of
the United Kingdom.

FELLOW WORKMEN,

We have been requested by resolution passed at a large meeting of enginemen and firemen, held November 9th, 1879, to make known the intention and object of the enginemen and firemen of the Midland District, in their arriving at the determination they have done, to establish a National Union.

We are of opinion it is unnecessary to argue the question as to the need of such Society, the many alterations made in the workings of the men on the different systems, and the reports coming in from all parts of the kingdom, all have one tendency, a necessity for unity of purpose, to be general in character, a combination of enginemen and firemen generally, adopting as a motto the word "Defence," thereby placing themselves in a position to protect its members against the unjust and arbitrary influences of intermediate officialism, to provide temporary assistance in cases of members being out of employment, to assist legally in cases where necessary, and still further, it is suggested that an emigration scheme be included amongst the provision adopted.

It also has in view, as one of its chief aims, an advocacy of a universal system of working throughout the United Kingdom, believing this to be essential to the general welfare of all concerned.

With these objects in view, the meeting assembled unanimously decided to make a commencement. Officers are appointed pro tem., a committee selected to introduce rules which are now in circulation, an entrance fee with a contribution at a low rate fixed upon for the time being, the whole, we have no doubt, will

be considerably amended at a representative meeting, which will be eventually held, when our objects and aims are generally known.

In conclusion we earnestly appeal to the whole of the locomotive enginemen and firemen throughout the kingdom for their co-operation and assistance, being fully of opinion that only by such a Society are the interests of all to be protected in the future.

We, therefore, beg to remain, yours, Fellow Workmen,

THE COMMITTEE.

Correspondence to be addressed to D. Phipps, Committee Room, Duke of York, Doe Street, from whom all particulars may be obtained.

On December 17th of 1880 the Committee of the proposed new Society again issued a clarion call to drivers and firemen to work out their own salvation, the following being published in "The Railway Service Gazette"—

PROPOSED ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE STEAM ENGINEMEN AND FIREMEN.

The following has been during the past few months extensively circulated among enginemen and firemen, with results very satisfactory to the committee :—

We propose to you that a society be formed, consisting of enginemen and firemen only, who shall, for the first six months, be admitted under the following conditions :—

Members to be in good health, irrespective of age. Enginemen to pay 5s. entrance, and firemen 2s. entrance ; afterwards the entrance fees to be increased, and admittance to be paid for according to age (as it would be unfair to the younger members to admit old men on the same terms as themselves). All members to pay 1s. per week for twelve months before being in benefit. The Society to be a Trade Union Sick and Benefit Society, to relieve its members in sickness and distress ; to pay a sum of £60 to members incapacitated by sickness, old age, or accident, with a weekly sum of 7s. 6d. superannuation. Twelve shillings per week for illness, not caused by their own misconduct, for the

first six months ; and, for remainder of illness, 6s. per week. Twelve shillings per week whilst seeking employment, for 12 weeks ; and 6s. per week for the ensuing 14 weeks. Twenty pounds to be paid at the death of a member, and £5 at the death of a member's wife. Should it be deemed necessary, at any time, for any portion of the members to be withdrawn from their employment, such members to receive twelve shillings per week whilst out, and two shillings per week for each child under ten years of age. Any member being discharged for having taken an active part in any question relating to hours or wages, or the well-being of his fellow-workmen, to receive a lump sum of £100, and fifteen shillings per week whilst seeking re-employment. By doing this we hope to disarm that tyranny from which many have suffered, and deter many from taking that position which they should take when differences arise. We have no desire to interfere with that discipline which is as necessary to the safety of the public on railways as it is to ourselves, but merely to protect the men whom we send forward as our representatives. On the Great Western Railway alone 1,938 men signed the petition to the directors. Assuming that one-half are enginemmen, 969 at 5s. each—£242 5s., and 969 firemen, at 2s. each—£96 18s. ; making a total of £339 3s. for entrance fees alone. To this add a year's subscription of 1s. per week, which will make a sum of £5,337 19s. before the Society would be called on to pay any money out. Your Society should not cost more than £200 the first year for an active, energetic secretary. The money raised by the various Lodges to be kept in their own hands until the Delegates from the various lines decided where or how it should be invested. The Secretary to receive £150 per annum, and the remaining £50 would pay travelling expenses, etc. His duty would be to organise the Society, audit the various branch books, and report to a central committee, who would have sole control over the movements of the Organising Secretary.

Your obedient servants,

THE COMMITTEE.

It was described at once as "very selfish" of the enginemen to thus protect themselves, and "an act of folly to incur such expense." The editor of the "Gazette" reminded enginemen of the old fable concerning the bundle of faggots, and said isolated efforts were futile. Then when first copies of the proposed rules were available in February of 1880, instead of printing them, the "Gazette" discussed the question of "union or disunion."

"Stick to the all-embracing Amalgamated," the editor wrote. "Its arms are open to all railway servants, from the engineman to the platelayer, and the sooner our friends the enginemen—in this term we include firemen—give up the idea of forming a separate Association the better. . . . We cannot think that enginemen generally wish for any such efforts to be made."

What good will it be? asked correspondents, and its first efforts at formation were watched with interest. While the discussion was proceeding the A.S.R.S. took up the case of William McCulloch, a driver on the Caledonian, who was sentenced to four months imprisonment by Sheriff Lees at Glasgow on April 30th, 1880, after his train collided with another, because he relied upon a Clarke & Webb's patent chain brake, which failed to act when needed. No one was killed, but McCulloch was sent to join the thieves and rogues in Perth gaol because of an error of judgment when driving the west coast route express Carlisle to Glasgow. At Rutherglen the signals were against him, and he tried to pull up in time, but the chain brake would not operate. He had been 33 years with the Company, and 26 years as driver without mishap, yet he was removed to Perth in handcuffs as a criminal.

This case naturally aroused great indignation, and the efforts of the A.S.R.S. to secure mitigation of a savage sentence detracted from consideration of the new Society.

Another passing sensation was the report of Mr. Rothery, a member of the Court of Inquiry into the Tay Bridge disaster, which had taken 79 lives in December of 1879. Mr. Rothery held the opinion :—

“ That the structure was badly designed, badly constructed, and badly maintained, and that its downfall was due to inherent defects which must sooner or later have brought it down. For these defects, both in the design, the construction, and the maintenance, Sir Thomas Bouch is, in Mr. Rothery’s opinion, mainly to blame. For the faults of design he is entirely responsible. For those of construction he is principally to blame in not having exercised that supervision over the work which would have enabled him to detect and apply a remedy to them. And for the faults of maintenance he is also principally, if not entirely, to blame in having neglected to maintain such an inspection over the structure as its character imperatively demanded.”

The other members of the Inquiry reported almost as severely, but not so personally. Evidence had been given of cracked and damaged columns being puttied, painted, and used in the construction of the great bridge, and painters had reported girders and bonds loose and improperly bolted. The whole position of the bridge was said to be wrong.

Issues like this naturally silenced domestic affairs for a time, but late in 1880 and throughout 1881 the animosity was manifest. The conduct of the drivers and firemen at Liverpool, Pontypool, Sheffield, and other places was described as “reprehensible and treacherous.” Yet in all conscience there was urgent need for the Society, if only to apply its protection funds to such a flagrant contrast as the one I have presented. Was the trenchant exposure of the jerry-builders and bad designers of the Tay Bridge followed by prosecution, even though four score lives were lost? Not at all—there were words, just words—and the matter was allowed to die out when the new Tay Bridge was better built by other hands. But poor McCulloch, whose mistake cost no life, was sent to gaol. Then before the Society had been in existence a year came a still more painful contrast with the Tay Bridge crime. A collision on the line led to the death of one passenger, and the driver of the colliding train was arrested, tried and convicted of manslaughter. Long records of faithful service, and instances

of great ability shown on many occasions, were mercilessly swept aside by one little slip of memory, which sent one train banging into another and cost a life. The accident occurred at Prestbury, and it brought Mr. Clement E. Stretton, civil engineer, who later became consulting engineer to the Associated Society, into prominence.

The A.S.R.S. was in low water at the time, and at the Darlington Conference in 1882 the General Secretary, Mr. Fred W. Evans, reported :—

“ There is not much encouragement to be derived from a review of the numerical and influential position of the Society. For three successive years the members have gone on decreasing, and the downward tendency has not ceased. At the end of 1880, 8,589 members made up the Society ; 7,700 members were in the Society on August 30th, 1881, at the end of 1881 the number was reduced to 6,874, and from the half-yearly returns to hand, I compute the Society's present strength to be not more than 6,000 members.”

In the meantime the utmost severity was exercised by companies towards drivers and firemen. These men, upon whose loyalty and judgment rested the lives of the community and the property of the companies, were treated with something worse than cold indifference ; they were treated with contempt and harshness.

“ To give a man a half hour for work which occupies an hour or an hour and a half is common amongst enginemen and firemen on those lines where the hours are not taken from the time the man books on duty to the time he books off.”

After the Society had been formed and officers elected, the following further circular was issued :—

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
AND FIREMEN.

REGISTERED UNDER ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

To the Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen
of Great Britain.

It is now over six months since we last addressed you, at that time having decided upon a Code of Rules for the future guidance of our Society, and now we have much pleasure in stating that those Rules have received the approval of the Registrar, and that henceforward we take our place amongst the legalized Trade Societies of this Country. We have met with delays and opposition which it would have been foolish not to expect, but still we have steadily pursued the objects we had in view, and have thus far conducted them successfully.

We make no pretence at perfection, but trust with your co-operation and assistance to be able to bring the intentions of this noble Institution to a wise and legitimate issue.

Our objects, therefore, are very plain and simple, whilst we mean to win the respect of our employers, by maintaining a manly and dignified respect for ourselves, by fulfilling the trust which is given into our charge faithfully and honourably to the best of our ability. We shall at all times expect and endeavour to get them to stand by their agreements, and not break faith with us as they have done heretofore, and deprive us of the just reward of our labour.

Our Funds are formed by Entrance Fees and Weekly Contributions, for the relief of our sick, incapacitation by old age or accident from following our profession or calling, paying a sum of money at the death of Members or their wives, for the relief of Members when on travel in search of employment, or in distressed circumstances, to advance the interests of our Members generally by procuring a reduction in the excessive hours of labour, and a uniform rate of hours and mileage *per diem* on

all Railways throughout the country, the adoption of modern improvements for the general safe working of our railways, with a limit to the speed of trains, which is of as much importance and well being to the public and the shareholders as it is to ourselves.

We have no desire to become dictators to our employers or their representatives, and whilst we will endeavour to assist them in all economical reforms and workings, we shall at least expect fair treatment and just pay for our anxious and dangerous duties.

We have left our Rules open for modification at any future period ; and whilst endeavouring to protect our Members against all injustice, we have taken equal care to protect the representatives of our employers from the insults of any foolish or ignorant Members, being satisfied that all should live as far as possible peaceably together, each man doing his duty fairly and honestly, then the public and our employers will be better served, and each man will perform his duty more cheerfully.

We ask you again, the Enginemen and Firemen of this great country, one and all to assist us in carrying out our programme by joining this Society.

The Rules have been framed by Enginemen and Firemen especially for your interests, the Executive duties are performed by men of your own class, your officials are and will continue to be elected from amongst you, they are your servants, the General Secretary is an Engineman of long and practical experience, who knows full well the nature of your responsibility and anxious duties, and who has been elected by his fellow-men to take the management of their affairs.

The interests of the Society and its members will be carefully looked over by a firm of respectable and eminent lawyers, and all that human forethought can devise will be done to ameliorate your condition and conduct the business of this Society on an honourable and sound basis.

A few words to our friends, the members of the " Old Engine-

man's Sick Society," may not be out of place here. This organisation has not been got up in opposition to your well-managed Club, of which most of us are members, but rather to supply a want which you have long neglected, and the necessity of which is patent to all thoughtful enginemen. But are there no means by which the two Societies can amalgamate? We make the proposition in all honesty and friendliness, we seek a closer bond of union between the Enginemen and Firemen.

Our Branches are numerous and steadily increasing, our Funds are in a satisfactory state; we do not wish to boast, neither do we intend that our affairs shall be made public; we neither fear nor court criticism, but intend to carry on our affairs in our own simple way, and will give all members any and every information which the most exacting may require. Many of our members are already receiving the benefits of our various Branches, and hundreds of non-members are reaping the rewards of our actions in reductions in their hours of labour, which we have no doubt will become more general as the area of our operation spreads.

We deprecate any violent means of arriving at those concessions which it is our aim to obtain, and trust that all our councils may be marked for their moderation and humility, and that we may never have to record in the history of our Society any of those unhappy events which so often set Capital and Labour at variance.

On behalf of the Executive,

JOSH. BROOKE, Secretary.

REGISTERED OFFICE :—

COMMERCIAL INN,

SWEET STREET, HOLBECK,

LEEDS.

Where all Communications must be addressed.

As an indication how sympathy was gradually returning to the grievances of enginemen, whose case for protection and resistance was indeed urgent, I quote the following article from the same "Gazette" after it had received the circular from the committee :—

THE PROPOSED NEW SOCIETY OF ENGINEMEN
AND FIREMEN.

We have just received a copy of a circular from the committee, who invite enginemen and firemen to join them in forming a new society. We print the circular in another column. It will be eagerly read by many, especially by those who belonged to the now defunct Enginemen's Society, sometimes called the 1867 Society. That there is ample room for such an association is evident from the way in which the committee has been met by large numbers of enginemen and firemen. Large numbers who were members of the old society, but for some reason or other would never join the A.S.R.S., have responded to this invitation, and are working with a will to establish on a sure footing a society after their own heart. Indeed, it is not only now, or for a few weeks, that the promoters and their friends have been quietly and steadily working, they have been for many months feeling their way and sowing the seed, which will doubtless soon bear fruit which will fully reward them.

If any other proof were required to show that there is ample room for such a society as this, it need only be remembered that a comparatively small number—we believe not one-sixth—of the railway servants of the United Kingdom will join the Amalgamated Society. We have often regretted this; we have frequently been somewhat at a loss to know why so many thousands of railwaymen would not join the society. It has done much for them, it has held its doors open to receive all who would come, it has sent travelling and other secretaries about the country to its various branches to hold public meetings and induce non-members to join, but still a large majority, who all the time watched its proceedings, would not become "society men." However much this has been regretted, we all know that this is a land of liberty, and that every individual can do as he likes about any matter of this kind. It has been said that a travelling secretary of the Amalgamated Society wished to coerce non-members and compel them to join his society. We find it

hard to believe that any sane man would think of doing such a thing, and no one will for a moment believe that the society had any notion of that being done.

On the contrary, we think the Amalgamated Society will be glad to see those railwaymen, who could not come within its paling, unite and go to work for their common good. Knowing as we do that our readers, like other classes of men, cannot all see things from the same point of view, we rejoice that those who have for so long kept apart from the society are now going to work on the same idea, viz., that in unity there is strength. We wish the new Society of Enginemen and Firemen God-speed.

It seems almost an anomaly at first sight that a society so urgently needed should have such slow growth and severe early struggles as I have described. Suspicion and hostility towards it had been implanted in every A.S.R.S. branch, and then, too, the membership fee and contributions were high. The bid made for security was a bold one, and it is not surprising that large numbers of drivers decided to watch for a time how the thing went. I have traced the early years, and then thrown on to them the light of conditions prevailing at the time. With one further example we can close the chapter. It is the statement of a Lancashire & Yorkshire driver :—

“Just fancy, a driver having a mere lad with him to do a man’s work ! This boy, when he is not out firing, will be cleaning in the shed at eight or ten shillings a week. Of course, the driver is expected to run to time and do his work as though he had a first-class fireman with him. The question needs not to be asked who has to do the fireman’s work. The driver is the man. If he allows the boy to put coal on the fire, it is as a rule put on to waste ; I mean it is not put on in a proper way to get steam and to maintain a proper pressure. There are hundreds of tons of coal wasted in this way, for which the driver is responsible. I have run many a hundred miles, and often could not see a signal owing to my having been firing up ; the glare of the fire takes away one’s sight for a few minutes. The driver invariably puts

on the coal when it is the safest, and not when he actually wants it on."

The time had come for drivers and firemen to save themselves, but not all saw it yet.



MR. T. G. SUNTER,
General Secretary, 1885—1901.

CHAPTER V

This Memorial Humbly sheweth—The first Executive Council—
Early Branch Members—Fines and Victimisation—A Rift
Within the Lute—Thomas Sunter Becomes Secretary.

IN the good year 1835, when railways were beginning to boom, medical men declared that " Travelling in cars drawn by a locomotive ought to be forbidden in the interests of the public health. The rapid movement cannot fail to produce amongst passengers a mental affection known as *delirium furiosum*. A single glance at the locomotive rapidly passing is sufficient to cause the same cerebral derangement. Consequently, it is absolutely necessary to build fences ten feet high on each side of the railway ! "

A nice state of affairs that would have caused. Fancy a driver travelling every day with high wooden fences on each side, fancy the amount of good timber needed to block the open view, fancy the agony of travelling by train, and then fancy the great silliness of doctors talking like that. By the year 1880 all the nation must have got over its *delirium furiosum*, but similar objection, equally stupid, was being taken to the organisation of men. Things are very different now to what they used to be, and as a striking illustration of the change let me quote the very meek and humble memorial presented late in 1879 by the men of the G.W.R. to the directors thereof, about the harsh circular I have previously referred to. Here is the document :—

THE MEMORIAL OF THE ENGINEMEN AND FIREMEN OF THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

To the Honourable Board of Directors,

Humbly Sheweth,

That your Memorialists approach your Honourable Board to lay before you the desire of your Memorialists, and regret that they should be compelled to make this third appeal to you for the withdrawal of Circular 3,478, issued by Mr. Dean, October 1st, 1879, which increases the hours of labour, and in many cases reduces the wages of your Memorialists, and ask your Honourable Board for ten hours per day booking on and off duty, also 150 miles for passenger and 120 miles for goods to constitute a day's work. That no man receive less than six days if able to perform his duty; and we consider classification as put in Circular 3,478 a very unfair thing between master and man; and being undismayed by the opposition you gave to our second appeal, we, as workmen in whose hands the lives and property of yours and the public are placed, are convinced that, in justice to our employers and ourselves, we are entitled to a more merciful consideration from your Honourable Board, and for further justification we may mention that the increased anxiety, excessive speed, and the additional number and weights of the trains, additional signals, and night duty we have to perform, alone is sufficient to lay claim to the suggestions in this Memorial, and which is necessary for the safety of ourselves and the benefit of our employers, and we also ask your Honourable Board to receive a deputation of the men to state their grievances, and place your Memorialists in the position they now seek, to obtain direct from the Board, as your Memorialists are at all times agreeable to accept any reasonable terms issued direct from you, otherwise would feel extremely grieved to state that we cannot possibly accept Circular 3,478.

And in conclusion your Memorialists ask for scale of wages to remain as in 1874 Circular, and express their gratitude for all past favours.

Hoping you will give this Memorial your favourable consideration, with a view that the harmony that has hitherto existed may be strengthened, and that we may ever endeavour to merit the same, is the desire of your Memorialists.

We beg to remain your humble servants,

Signed by the delegates on behalf of the men.

That abject tone reads very sadly. It is still more sad to reflect that the deputation came, some of them very nervously, as if they were going to trial by Assize, and they went empty away. What would you do now, my hearties, in this year 1921, if a reduction of wages and increase of hours were imposed? Would you very humbly petition and most respectfully submit certain things, or would you speak directly to the point and call for a ballot vote? I fancy I know also how the ballot would go. The difference is just that made by the start of the Associated Society in 1880, with its strike emergency and victimisation funds. It began the new trail, and we have not yet completed the journey.

Let us look then at the work being done by the local committee at Leeds in those early years. I have before me the first Minute Book, covering the years 1880 to 1890, and I have read every line with interest. Its first page is inscribed in capital letters :—

*EXECUTIVE MINUTE
BOOK OF
ASSOCIATED LOCOMOTIVE
ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN'S
TRADES UNION SICK AND
FRIENDLY SOCIETY,
ESTABLISHED
JANUARY 1st, 1881.*

The first meeting elected Joseph Brooke as first secretary, called for a levy of 5s. per member to meet present obligations, and

instructed the secretary to telegraph Mr. Dauncey, solicitor, of Newport, not to proceed with the rules until the executive had decided whether to register under the Trade Union Act of 1871 or the Friendly Society Act of 1875, but not under both. On April 17th the draft rules of the Society were signed by seven members of the executive, after being altered by Mr. Dauncey in accordance with the wishes of the Registrar, and it was resolved "that twenty copies be struck off, for each branch to have a copy." It was resolved to arrange with Mistress Pickersgill, at the Commercial Inn, Sweet Street, Leeds, for a room to be fitted and made the chief office of the Society. On July 17th Messrs. William Collier, Nelson Smith, and James Atkey were elected to the executive, with George Bamforth as chairman, H. Shuttleworth as vice-chairman, and Joseph Brooke, as secretary. The Leeds, Skyrack & Morley Bank were appointed bankers for the funds under the charge of the Executive Committee.

Following are the names and addresses of the first Executive Council :—

Geo. Bamforth, 4, Alpha Avenue, Hunslet, Leeds (Chairman).
Hy. Shuttleworth, 11, Rothsay Street, Elland Road, Leeds
(Vice-Chairman).

Geo. Rushworth, 17, Oldfield Lane, New Wortley, Leeds
(Treasurer).

Saml. Holland, 9, Bismarck Place, Bismarck Street, Lady Pit
Lane, Leeds (Trustee).

Chas. Woodhead, 6, Third Avenue, New Wortley, Leeds
(Trustee).

Saml. Lester, 43, Algeria Street, Malvern Road, Leeds.

Thos. Sunter, 91, Bewerley Street, Beeston Road, Leeds.

Walter Arnold, 6, Redshaw Terrace, Tong Road, New Wortley.

Nelson Smith, 18, Ashford Street, Beeston Road.

Wm. Collier, 9, Dunstan Street, Bewerley Street.

Benj. Fielding, 7, Gladstone Street, Cemetery Road, Beeston
Hill.

Jas. Atkey, 6, Waverley Mount, Lady Pit Street, Leeds.

The Society's registered number was 348. At the meeting on August 8th it was resolved to write the Earl de la Warr, who had interested himself in the passage of the Employers' Liability Act, as to the restriction of the speed of trains. A circular was prepared for the enginemen and firemen of the whole country, 5,000 copies being ordered, and it was decided to abandon the idea of starting a new paper, "providing the one due to come out will advocate the interests of the Society." The secretary was deputed to visit branches, and Messrs. Perry and Ingram to visit the general meeting at Bristol with a view to opening a new branch. "We must wait a year," Perry had written in February of 1880, and the facts proved him right. At the close of 1881, after two years hard work and great daring, the Associated Society contained 681 members. Its total receipts had been £1,371 19s., and at the beginning of the year it had in hand from the pioneer members joining in 1880 a sum of £551 8s. 9½d. The total expenditure had been £436 19s. 4½d., leaving in hand a sum of £1,496 8s. 5d. Readers will notice how big the funds were compared to the membership, roughly 45s. per head. It was explainable by the big membership fees paid, some paying £2 and even £3 on joining. They meant having a fund for drivers and firemen, and they sacrificed to get it.

I turn to the beautifully-written first general register of the Society, to find how William Ulliyott was the first to join up at Sheffield on February 7th, 1880, and how fifty-five other drivers and firemen did the same, following his lead the same night. At Pontypool a week later, February 15th, 1880, Charles H. Perry led the way, supported the same night by fifty-six others. Tondur enrolled a dozen on April 4th, 1880, and Liverpool came along with a big consignment of thirty on May 23rd. The next night, May 24th, Leeds took up the strain, and we get a dozen entrants for the new Society. Neath added half-a-dozen on May 30th, and 38 more on June 13th, including Mr. Henry Parfitt (membership No. 229). There follow additions from Leeds, Liverpool, Neath, Pontypool, and then on June 28th Bradford weighs in with sixteen or more. Carnforth forwards a batch of entrants for July 4th,

and during 1880 these towns augment their numbers. June 13th of 1881 sees Gloucester joining up its battalion of 41 members, and another big consignment from Neath, Leeds and Liverpool. Llanelly appears on July 22nd, 1881, with seventeen entrants, and the original branches continue to augment their numbers. Exeter falls into line on October 2nd, 1882, with thirty members, considerably increased during 1883. Nottingham comes in with forty or more on April 20th of 1883, and Bristol presents a score on August 23rd of the same year. By October 1st Swansea is in the moving tide, and Nottingham presents a new contingent. January of 1884 has carried the call into the West and Plymouth enrolls, whilst in the next month York and Paddington add their strength to the new organisation. Next Cardiff and New Swindon (April, 1884) need a page of the register, and Oxford comes into view with thirty men (April 8th). Paddington gave the thousandth member, and Newport contributed nearly thirty in 1884.

So progressed the first five years, but to complete the picture of this starting period it is necessary to turn from the Register to the Minute Book. The Committee resolved, in January of 1882, to buy a fireproof safe to keep valuables in, and to have a small stamp for the Society, "to consist of engine with name of Society round it." Auditors were appointed from Sheffield, Pontypool, and Liverpool South End according to rule, to examine accounts at head office. In the following month it was resolved that the secretary give up his present employment as engine driver, and devote his time to the interests of the Society, also that he be paid £50 for his services in the first year, and Mr. Rushworth £30 for his assistance. In July of 1882 it was resolved that £1,000 of executive funds be transferred to the Investment Department at the bank, and that receipt books be ordered for sums of money paid in benefits.

Then we come to the first little rift within the lute, reference to an unpleasant episode which continued for some months. The brief records are as follow :—

September 17th, 1882. "The whole of the evening spent in

debating what the Treasurer termed irregularities of the executive management."

October 1st, 1882. "That each member of the Executive receive 1s. for expenses when attending meetings."

October 15th. "That all enginemen up to 40 years of age be allowed to join the Society at an entrance fee of 10s., and all firemen at a fee of 5s., in accordance with the views of the majority of branches, and be in operation during the pleasure of the Executive."

November 26th. "That Thomas Sunter be appointed Assistant General Secretary."

December 3rd. "That the keys of the General Office be given to T. Sunter, to act instead of J. Brooke, according to Rule 7."

February 4th, 1883. "That a delegate meeting be held at Leeds the first Monday in September."

June 3rd. "Mr. Clement Hazledine made an assertion that the General Secretary was not doing his duty, that it was entirely his fault that the branch balance sheets were not to hand, and he knew blooming well I could not mix the business of a publican and the secretaryship as well, but he was not able to state where or when the Secretary had neglected any part of the Society's business."

"Mr. Shuttleworth stated that the Society was paying a lot of money for a Secretary who had no influence and was simply a nonentity."

What had happened? The fact was that the Society was growing bigger and more important than its originators realised, and Joseph Brooke, having a personal interest in the welfare of the Commercial Inn, was not exclusively devoted to the Society. The Leeds Executive was quite resolved that the movement must progress in spite of individuals who might not have their souls in it. They had elected, in 1883, Mr. Samuel Holland as Chairman of the Executive; they had bought a brass enamelled plate to indicate the head office; they had visited branches and seen the growth of the spirit of unity and brotherhood, and were resolutely determined that the head office

should be a worthy centre of that spirit. They had paid back to members scores of fines for paltry faults on duty, and had paid wages and half wages in numberless cases of suspension. The Society was growing and being talked about, and a leader of men was needed as the central pivot.

At a special meeting held on July 15th the Secretary was instructed to wait upon the Chief Constable to ask permission to hold an executive during the whole day on Sunday, July 15th, at the Commercial Inn. Permission was given, and the meeting was continued from 9.30 a.m. to 9.20 p.m., "going through rules and suggesting alterations for consideration of delegate meeting in September." On September 2nd, a Mr. Banning declared that the General Secretary was paid too much by one half. It was decided in November of 1883 that the General Secretary take steps to bring about an amalgamation between this Society and the old Enginemen & Firemen's Society. A ruling was laid down that all letters on Society business be copied, and that all correspondence be read at the executive meetings by Mr. Webb. On April 6th of 1884 Messrs. Ford and Warren were appointed solicitors to the Society, and thus began an association which has been most honourably conducted to mutual advantage ever since. On May 4th of 1884 a hammer was bought for the chairman's use, and this hammer, after over 36 years' use at important meetings during those changing times, was presented to Mr. W. A. Stephenson, the retiring president, in November of 1920.

In June of 1884, after the payment of large numbers of fine and suspension costs to members working on the M.S. & L., it was resolved "That the Secretary write the members of the Sheffield branch respecting the general disregard of the Company's rules and signals by the members of this Society belonging to the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincoln Railway, and trust that, in the interests of the Society and their own future welfare, they will pay more respect to these rules, which have been framed by the Company for their guidance, as there is about 75 per cent. more of these misfortunes happen amongst members of the M.S. & L. than any other



Address presented by the Society to Mr. Clement E. Stretton, the Consulting Engineer.

Company's men in the Society." There were other difficulties at Sheffield, a local Treasurer defaulting to the extent of £217 14s. 7½d., and after full investigation and legal advice, the matter was placed with the Society's solicitors, and a prosecution ordered. An agreement was reached for the payment of £60 down and the balance by 10s. weekly. Tondu was authorised to open a branch on June 29th of 1884, "as it will be more convenient than having to pay their contributions to Neath." In September the Secretary gave a report of the opening of a new branch at Newport, and on November 30th it was decided "that Thomas Sunter have his fine returned, 7s. 6d., for having a hot axle on August 4th." In December a case of dismissal of a delegate caused very serious consideration, but it was found on inquiry that there had been a violation of the Company's rule to furnish a pretext for the dismissal.

At the beginning of 1885 the Secretary visited Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth and Pontypool, and all branches were supplied with lists of benefits and unjust and arbitrary fines paid back to members. There were cases of M.S. & L. men being suspended for being away from home when called upon for duty, and others for refusing to go on duty after insufficient rest. In all of these pernicious cases wages were made good by the Society.

The year 1885 brought a return and a completion of the friction with the first General Secretary, referred to earlier in this chapter. The records are in this manner :—

March 29th. "Special sub-committee appointed to find a more suitable place for a general office ; Messrs. Brooke, Holland, Sunter, Lester, and Webb appointed for this purpose."

April 26th. "Proposed that the General Secretary write all branches, requesting them to return the circular letter re action of Executive Committee respecting removal of general office."

April 26th. "Proposed by Thomas Sunter and seconded by William Webb, that the General Secretary be suspended for—(here another hand takes up the record)—for persistently opposing the wishes of the Executive Committee by refusing to carry out their instructions in writing to branches for circular relating

to letters respecting the removal of the general office, stating that he would write what he thought proper to branches."

"That Mr. Samuel Holland and Mr. Samuel Lester take charge of the general office and effects."

April 27th. "Agreement entered into between Joseph Brooke on the one part and Messrs. Holland, Lester, Amey, and Shuttleworth on the other part, that the question of removal of the office be waived till the assembly of delegates, and that the Secretary, Mr. Brooke, agrees to write the Secretary of each branch to return the circular or letter re removal of the office, and state that the E.C. wish this to be done, and further agrees to make no comment thereon; in fulfilment of this agreement the aforesaid allow the Secretary to follow his duty."

On May 10th the Secretary agreed to conform with the rules and to carry out the authority of the Executive.

June 28th. "Mr. Joseph Brooke refuses to sit at this meeting on account of the presence of William Webb, one of the members of the Executive, his reasons for so doing not being satisfactory."

"Proposed by J. T. Christian and seconded by William Webb, that Mr. T. G. Sunter carry on the duties of General Secretary until further notice. That the keys of the general office be given to Mr. Sunter."

July 19th. "That Mr. Sunter write all branches denying the statements made by the General Secretary to branches by his letter of July 4th (copy received from Pontypool)."

A delegate meeting was called for August 18th to decide the difficulty existing by the action of the General Secretary.

August 9th. "Resolved that all members of the Executive who cannot attend the delegate meeting send a written statement of their views of the dispute with the General Secretary to Mr. T. G. Sunter, who shall hand them to the Chairman of the Conference unopened."

The Delegate Meeting was held at the Commercial Inn on August 18th, 19th, and 20th, 1885.

August 30th. "That Mr. Brooke be asked to attend to this meeting, and attend his duties as General Secretary. Mr. Brooke agreed to do so. Also asked to withdraw his resignation to the delegates, and to continue to be General Secretary."

Nomination forms were sent out for the election of a General Secretary, the issue being settled by the members. Twelve hundred voting papers were ordered, and candidates were notified to attend the counting of the votes on Sunday, October 11th. Mr. Brooke was allowed to remain in the room if he desired.

Mr. T. G. Sunter was elected by a six to one majority, and the Committee resolved that he be accepted as General Secretary, and that he present his resignation as driver, to take up duty as soon as possible. A letter was sent out to all branches asking for the return of correspondence during the two months when none was copied, and a letter was sent to Mr. Brooke asking him to refund two months' salary during the time he refused to do the work of the Society—£26.

Thus ended, in the election of Mr. Sunter as General Secretary, and in the removal of the office and effects to Mill Hill, that very difficult internal struggle of 1885.

We shall be able in subsequent chapters to take up the story of conferences and delegate meetings, but for the present let us consolidate our gains up to the year 1885, by looking at the annual reports, before we pass on to some of the big events of the eighties—like the Hexthorpe Trial and the Midland Strike.

The report for the year 1882 showed total receipts in that year to have been £1,652 17s. 6d., and the expenditure £873 2s. 7½d., the funds at the end of the year standing at £2,266 3s. 3½d., and the membership at 671, with new branches opened at Gloucester and Sandhills. During the year 1883 the receipts totalled £1,901 3s. 10d., the expenditure £910 18s. 10d., and the funds at December 31st were £3,256 8s. 3½d., with a membership of 801. The balance sheet covering the year 1884 showed receipts to be £2,341; expenditure £1,177 7s. 5½d., and the funds in hand £4,420 9s. 9d., for a membership of 1,017. New branches had been opened at Llanelly,

Swansea, Exeter, Nottingham, Bristol, Plymouth and Cardiff. Growth continued very slowly during 1885, at the end of which the head office had been moved to 17, Mill Hill Chambers, Leeds. The total receipts that year were £7,074 9s. 5½d., including the sum of £4,420 9s. 9d. in hand at the beginning of the year. The expenditure was £1,307 1s. 4½d., and the funds in hand at the end of the year £5,767 8s. 1d., for 1,073 members

CHAPTER VI

Trouble on The Midland—First Emblems and Medallions—The Model Engines—A Calamitous Strike—The Generous Executive—Bitter Memories—The Tragedy of Tom Ball—Dot and Wool Tests—A North Eastern Programme.

“THE claims of the Society upon enginemen and firemen are becoming more fully recognised year by year,” said the seventh annual balance sheet, which covered the year up to December 31st, 1886. It had appeared in pamphlet form for the first time, looking much more substantial than the former single quarto sheet, but still only a ghost of the substances of later years. “The day is not far distant,” it proceeded confidently, “when the majority of enginemen and firemen will have recognised the fact that to be successful they must join an organisation composed of men of their own calling.” The members then numbered 1,593, and the reserve funds stood at £8,961 8s. 3d.

Nearly a third of this total were to be involved in the calamitous Midland strike before another year had passed. In earlier years conditions on the Midland had not been so bad as under some other lines, but irritation was expressed in January of 1886, when it was declared of a foreman at Nottingham “that his actions are very strange for a sane man.” Special meetings were held on Good Fridays and Sundays owing to severe penalties for small offences. A driver was suspended for twelve days for causing a train to be delayed three minutes at Trent; another was suspended for twelve days for a broken cast-iron eccentric; there were fines for passing

a danger signal, and fines equally heavy for refusing to pass a danger signal. There were fines and suspensions for running into stop-blocks, for hot axles, for bent stays, for being called off the engine, for coal falling in front of the brake, and for all sorts of things too trivial to detail. It was all very irksome, and a storm was evidently brewing.

These real grievances must not trail us from a correct sequence of the events of the years. In 1885 the first exclusively postal train had started running on the North Western, the Hull & Barnsley line had started, and the first train passed through the Mersey railway tunnel. In June of 1886 members of the Society were suggesting revisions of the rules, and the investment of funds in railway shares, along with provision for the return of a member to Parliament. The password and the oath were introduced as ritual safeguards against intrusion at branch meetings, but they were never generally observed. It was decided to secure model engines for the instruction of members, although they were not obtainable until greater efforts were made somewhat later. The formation of an agency was mooted for the assistance of members going abroad. A very curious inquiry was addressed to Swindon to ask how it was that the name of the Secretary and Treasurer did not appear in the list of members. In June of 1886 Mr. Storey accompanied the General Secretary to London to open the King's Cross branch.

October of 1886 brought a storm over the dismissal at Bow of Driver James Bowen, who was alleged to have over-run the signals set at danger. Contact was established with societies of Locomotive Engineers started in America and India, and the General Secretary was instructed to correspond "in a friendly and brotherly manner" with the general secretaries of those organisations. There are indications that even so soon the executive became reminiscent of its early years, for on October 31st of 1886 they decided to buy photographs of Mr. F. W. Webb's compound passenger engines, and of Mr. Perry, the founder, and Mr. William Ulliyott, the first member of the Society, to be placed in the general office, "the

executive to pay these expenses out of their own pocket, as they have now to resign."

In its first days the Society paid 30s. as contribution to the Trade Union Congress, but in 1886 it sent £10, and asked the committee to forward all possible information upon the Engineers' Certificate Bill. This was a Bill designed to forbid any but experienced and trained men handling locomotives and steam boilers. The examination systems imposed by companies caused a renewed demand for model engines to assist young members, and in 1887 a deputation of three members of the Executive was appointed to wait upon engineering firms to secure the necessary models. A sum of £100 was set apart for this purpose, but they took a lot of getting. It is easy to buy enormously costly toys for children, and miniatures of everything, from motor cars to perambulators, but it was not easy to get correct models of locomotives to instruct the future generation of drivers and firemen.

In 1887 the Executive got an advance in wages, two shillings instead of 1s. for their long meetings. They left over the question of a branch pass-word for future consideration. They decided to invite designs for a Society Emblem, and "that the first engineman and fireman be shown on this emblem, subject to their approval." In that year, too, it was "proposed by John Watkinson and seconded by G. W. Storey, that we have a Society Journal, to be issued quarterly, and that we order 1,000 copies for the first issue, and canvass for advertisements." Another interesting decision was "That we have 300 medals the size and thickness of a shilling, sterling silver," and a contract was accepted for these at 1s. 9d. each. A sub-committee was appointed to go into the "Journal" question, and it was further decided:—

"That we accept the Emblem known as No. 2, and that we congratulate Mr. Harker, Bristol; Mr. Horton, Plymouth; and Mr. Williams, London; for their designs sent. That 1,500 copies of the emblem be ordered, to be produced at the earliest convenience."

This was the Jubilee year, you remember, of Queen Victoria's reign, but it is chiefly memorable to railwaymen, not for the Jubilee celebrations, but for the spontaneous strike of enginemen on the Midland Railway Company. Earlier in the chapter I have indicated a state of affairs that was not happy, but on July 15th of 1887 new regulations were issued for enginemen, the most serious effect of which was to abolish what was known as the guaranteed week's wages, a condition which Midland enginemen had enjoyed for some time, but which, the Company contended, was being abused by the men. Some of them, it was said, could not be found or would not report for duty towards the end of the week. Even if that were so, the Company's action was still a drastic mistake, but the men denied that it was so, except in one or two isolated cases. The Company, however, resorted to the great injustice of punishing all the men for the alleged offences of the few.

Mr. Sunter, as General Secretary of the Associated, recognised at once the serious nature of this action, and all it might involve. He therefore issued an immediate circular to all branches, relating the position, and he consulted the solicitors to the Society upon the legal position. The men concerned, badly organised as they were, took the matter into their own hands. They were indignant at what they regarded as both an insult and an injury, and decided to strike. A large number of them were entirely unorganised, some belonged to the A.S.R.S., and four hundred or so were members of our Society. Without consulting anybody, or waiting for the sanction of any Executive, they decided to strike, and on August 5th they were out, leaving the Midland system in a state of disorganisation far more serious than their own.

After they had been out some days, the Executive of the A.S.L.E. & F. met on August 8th to review the whole position, and to decide upon a policy. All the enginemen were then out, and on August 8th it was :—

“Proposed by Frederick Lumb, seconded by Samuel Holland, that all our Midland members be instructed to cease work at once.—Carried.”

The Executive could hardly do any other. On the Midland at the time they met were some who refused to strike, and some firemen taking the places of drivers, while drivers from other systems were being sent to help the Midland defeat the men. It was impossible for a Society of Locomotive Engineers to endorse such a state of affairs. They had not sanctioned, or sought, or encouraged the strike, but they could not have any of their members black-legging the regular drivers during the struggle.

The consequences of this unofficial and misdirected strike were disastrous, and the general register of the Society is a pathetic record of members who were never re-instated.

"The necessity for combination," wrote Mr. Sunter some months later, "was never more fully illustrated than in the recent dispute with the Midland Company. If the men had belonged to our Society it would not have resulted in a strike, because the Company, realising the men's potency, would not venture to impose upon them such conditions. The statement that the Society encouraged the men to strike is not true. The Society did not encourage the men to strike, nor pay strike pay, but under the rules the Society paid out in out-of-work pay to 402 members £1,685 16s.; 56 members were assisted abroad at a cost of £261 10s., and six delegates who were discharged were allowed £100 each under the rules—£600."

The Midland strike cost the new Society something like £3,000, and a tribute of admiration is due to the committee for the generous manner in which it sought to bring the very best results out of a sad blunder by other people. There was no direct approach to companies by the Society then, because Trade Unions were not recognised. Amongst the delegates victimised by discharge for having taken part as a deputation to represent their fellow-workers at Derby were John Harrison, of Openshaw Branch, and Thomas Ball, of Nottingham Branch. To these and four others was paid a sum of £100 and 15s. weekly during unemployment. The Society also made an appeal to its branches for subscriptions, a fund

being thus raised for the help of those members who were not yet in benefit with the Society when they became involved in the strike. To these members was paid a sum not exceeding 12s. weekly. It was a splendid and honourable record for a young Society whose total funds were little over £7,000 at the time of this unexpected fight.

Mr. Parfitt told me an interesting incident that occurred some months later in connection with that strike. A G.W. driver from Aberdare was proceeding to lodgings at a foreign station when he met a former G.W.R. man who acted as blackleg on the Midland. The latter greeted the Aberdarian and held out his hand. The man from Aberdare did not speak or respond. Instead, he put down his basket and tea-can, and taking hold of his top-coat, which he carried over his arm, he turned it inside out, picked up his basket and tea, and walked silently on. The offender sharply realised that to fight against one set of men was to injure all.

Continuous attempts have been made to blame the Associated Society for this strike, and it was maligned for its own kindliness to its victims. No other society came out so generously, but it never endorsed the strike, nor incited it, nor even discussed it until the fourth day of its procedure, when other systems were urging men in to defeat the struggling men of the Midland. The fall lived in the memory of Midland men for twenty years, and in 1903 one exclaimed, "If any man says strike to me, I'll strike him on the head with a coal hammer." New strength has risen since then, and the whole Midland system has paused nine days without victimisation, without the possibility of one single man coming from other systems, and without suffering to a single member. Such is the value of industrial organisation.

The Society sacrificed, as I have shown, to assist the unfortunate, and this had two effects. It brought the reserve funds running down, and it sent the list of members running up. All over the country drivers and firemen noticed this first test of a Protection Fund, and saw it was something real in time of need. They saw the further lesson of national claims and united action, and began to move beyond the sectional view

A lead was given by the Executive in an appeal to all railwaymen of the country to assist by donations in helping all victims of the Midland strike who were non-members, and by that fund many were assisted to emigrate. At a gathering at Bradford, seven members who had their passages booked for new grounds in Canada were presented with the emigration grant of £5 each by Mr. T. G. Sunter.

It was decided on August 28th to consult the opinion of branches as to the advisability of appointing an organising secretary, but no salary or permanency were decided upon. In October it was agreed that the branches should be again consulted as to the need of such an appointment, and the Executive arranged for a special meeting on November 6th to give full consideration to this project. When that day came Messrs. William Field, Joseph Rotherforth, and Alan Higgins took their seats as members, "they being elected by their branches." After the discussion it was

"Proposed by F. Lumb, and seconded by James Gill, that an organising secretary be appointed until December 31st, 1888, and that his salary be £2 per week and third-class railway fare and hotel expenses, his expenses to be submitted monthly to the Executive Committee; that he reside in Leeds and commence duty as soon as possible, and take his instructions from the General Secretary."

"That Thomas Ball, a member of the Nottingham Branch, be appointed organising secretary to the Society on the conditions laid down in the previous minute, and if he refuses, the position be offered to Mr. Geo. W. Storey."

The first organiser continued his work during 1888, and the appointment being renewed, he went on during 1889 and into 1890. In May of the latter year he was suspended after visits to Southampton and Salisbury had been reported by local members. Mr. H. Shuttleworth, who was also a victim of the Midland strike, and became assistant secretary to the Society, was deputed to inquire and report, and following upon the report he presented in

June, it was "decided that Mr. Ball do now resume duty, and is not to be paid for the time he was suspended." The resumption was not to be for long, however. Poor Tom Ball set out on an organising tour in Scotland, absolutely new ground to the Society. His programme became lost in obscurity, but his last point of call was found to have been Hamilton, early in 1891, after he had opened the Glasgow Branch. The living Tom Ball was never heard of or seen again, and all efforts to locate him failed. His chequered life was believed to have ended in tragedy, for some time later, December 10th of 1892, the body was discovered in a decomposed state at Astley, in the township of Swillington. Let us remember him by his report of September, 1889: "We have opened our 54th branch and admitted over 600 members this year."

Another appointment of great interest to the Society, made in 1887 also, was contained in the decision of October 9th, 1887: "That we secure the services of Clement E. Stretton, Esq., C.E., as consulting engineer to the Society." The decision was announced to branches by the following circular:—

17, MILL HILL CHAMBERS,

LEEDS,

October 11th, 1887.

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you, for the information of your Members, that on the 9th October, Mr. Clement E. Stretton, C.E., was offered and has just accepted the position of Consulting Engineer to our Society. As soon as I became aware, on the 7th inst., that Mr. Stretton's previous appointment with another Society had terminated, I felt sure I should have the hearty support of our Members in asking him to accept so important a position with us, knowing, as we do, that by his scientific and practical knowledge in railway working, and the valuable assistance he has rendered to all classes of railwaymen for a great number of years past, we have every hope for the

future ; and I trust the Society will be highly gratified by the appointment.

Yours truly,

T. G. SUNTER,

General Secretary.

The appointment continued during three active years, but on February 19th, 1890, the committee accepted Mr. Stretton's resignation. Differences of opinion and the irrepressible personality of Mr. Stretton led to the parting of the ways. He was a publicist, giving his views on every railway issue very promptly and ably, but not always in a manner that expressed the views of his Executive.

Once or twice they had to dissociate themselves from his views in the railway journals, and to request Mr. Stretton not to attach his capacity as their consulting engineer to his public expressions of opinions.

This became especially compromising over what was known as the "dot and wool tests" for eyesight. These tests were both severe and absurd. The "dot" test consisted of a series of quarter-inch dots to be counted at fifteen feet distance. The "wool" test consisted of a series of fifty shades of wool, and the driver and fireman had to name them, sort them and match them, as if they were young ladies seeking employment in a fancy goods shop, or aspired to be painters or dyers. As a practical test for railway work they were useless, and tests of a more practical nature were demanded. The history of the eyesight test is a long one, emerging at periods throughout the history of the Society.

Late in the year 1887 there was a wage movement on the North Eastern system. It included drivers, firemen, guards, mineral guards, and signalmen, and the claim submitted to the directors early in 1888 included the following clauses :—

"Engine drivers to commence at 5s. per day; after six months 5s. 6d.; after one year 5s. 9d.; third year 6s.; fourth year 6s. 3d.; fifth 6s. 6d.; sixth 6s. 9d.; seventh 7s.; express drivers 7s. 6d. per day. Firemen to commence at 3s. per day;

after six months 3s. 4d. ; after one year 3s. 6d. ; third year 3s. 9d. ; fourth year 4s. ; fifth year 4s. 2d. ; sixth year 4s. 4d. ; seventh year 4s. 6d. In cases where firemen are required to fire more than twelve years, 4s. 9d. per day. Ten hours to constitute a day in all cases. All time worked in excess of ten hours to be paid at time and a quarter."

"In conclusion, your employees desire that you will kindly consider their responsible, arduous, and dangerous duties, and that you will grant the requests contained in the above programme. Should you have the beneficence to grant our requests, we can only add that it shall be our aim to do our duty to the best of our ability, and thus deserve your future approbation and confidence."

CHAPTER VII

Railway Accidents—Footboards, Subways, and Bridges—No Compensation—Exhaustion by Long Hours—Conditions of Slavery—A South Eastern Programme—Scottish Drivers Victimised—Terrible Records.

TO grumble is the natural prerogative of human beings, and we are inclined to grumble sometimes about slow progress, and about old grievances which linger far too long with us. A member of five or six years standing, for example, has no conception of the long series of struggles and triumphs by those who have preceded him, and no idea of the vast debt he owes to the continuous efforts of the Society through all these years. Give me now a little of your time to examine conditions as they once were, to look at the record of hard endeavour and steady progress, and at the great distance which separates conditions which once prevailed from those conditions which prevail to-day.

Let us take first the state of affairs just before the A.S.L.E. & F. came into existence. In the year 1878 there was only the A.S.R.S., the all-grades movement, buoyed up by the money and encouragement of certain M.P.'s. Its six years of life had not been happy, not at all. There had been quarrels between executive officers, and the danger of collapse only saved by the timely help of Mr. Bass and others. On the night of Wednesday, January 30th, 1878, a public meeting of railwaymen was held in the Exeter Hall, London, to urge Parliament to pass a measure of compensation to railway servants for injuries. Mr. Thomas Brassey, M.P., presided,

supported by many other M.P.'s, and even a duke sent a sympathetic letter expressing his regret for absence, as did several earls. Here is part of the statement made to the meeting by Mr. Fred Evens, General Secretary of the A.S.R.S. :—

“ In the years 1874-5-6 there were 3,982 persons killed and 16,762 injured on the railways of the United Kingdom ; 2,249 of those killed and 10,305 of the injured were railway servants who worked the traffic. The directors said the passengers were killed or injured by their own want of caution, but the public knew that if we had continuous footboards. then the number of injured would be greatly reduced. The number of persons killed and injured at railway stations would have been saved if there were sub-ways and bridges. But continuous footboards, subways, and bridges cost money, and the companies were not responsible for such accidents ; therefore there were no continuous footboards, subways, or bridges.”

The long hours worked by railway servants were truly appalling at that time. Captain Tyler, in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Railway Accidents (1877), gave the case of a driver of a pilot engine who had been on duty forty hours, and his guard nineteen. A driver spoke of being on his engine “ eighteen, twenty, or twenty-four hours,” and finding “ his faculties impaired and his energy abated towards the close of such a long day’s work.” Mr. Hargreaves, a stationmaster on the Manchester & Liverpool line, said “ guards and drivers sometimes make ten hours overtime at a stretch, and four to five hours overtime is quite a regular thing,” and this after a ten to twelve hours day, and often not a penny payment for the overtime.

Mr. Hanbury, inspector in the locomotive department of the Midland, was asked about drivers going to sleep on the engines owing to excessive exhaustion :—

“ What is the longest time of a man being at work in any case that has come under your knowledge ?—I have heard of cases this winter of men being on duty for thirty-five hours.

"Do you mean continuously on their engines?—Yes.

"Would he not have been able in those 35 hours to have any sleep?—When shunting on a siding he has an opportunity of going to sleep on his engine, but of course it is not comfortable sleep."

Mr. Hanbury had known of eighteen or nineteen hours being worked in bad weather, frost and snow, yet he never found a man slack in his duty on account of overwork, which speaks volumes for the conscientious endurance of engine drivers. A witness from the Irish Midland deposed that during the winter he "worked thirty to forty hours without getting off his feet."

"Did that constant employment make you feel unfit to do your work?—I am sure I fell off the box, where I stand, asleep. I could not see the signals." Cases were mentioned of drivers on the same line having only six hours sleep in a week. And yet Captain Tyler reported :—

"I should be very sorry to see any legislative interference, prescribing any particular hours for railway working. It must be left, I think, to the companies to work the men as they find it best and most convenient."

In other words, this ghastly state of slavery must continue, in the interests of railway capital. A Parliamentary Committee had reported in 1873 that "the companies have a direct pecuniary interest in keeping their lines safe," and we have seen the thousands of tragedies resulting because Parliamentary interference was considered unnecessary. At the close of 1872 the Board of Trade had issued a circular to the companies, stating that improved methods of working, of proved value, had been too slowly introduced, and sufficient provision had not been made for the safe working of increased traffic. This advice was of no effect. Indeed, the number of servants killed in 1873 was 148 more than in 1872, when they numbered 634, with 1,388 injured. Sir Henry Tyler advised automatic continuous brakes to be operated by drivers as well as guards ; extension of the block and interlocking system,

and a better and more developed permanent way. The servants of the companies were the victims of this neglect, and under the existing law they had no means of redress. Not a single case of accident, fatal or otherwise, was attributed to neglect by the companies, and there was no legal guarantee of compensation for injuries or death. Incomplete returns of accidents were regularly made to the Board of Trade to hide the true facts, and the companies simply gave doles to the men's Provident and Mutual Insurance Societies. These gifts, the best of them, totalled less than one half-penny per servant per week, while the traffic receipts of the richest company were £9,320,977. "Any alteration in the law," said Mr. Findlay, General Manager of the London & North Western, "would make it, of course, no longer the interest of the Company to assist in carrying on societies for times of sickness, accident, or death." The Great Western, in 1874, employed 1,650 engine-men and firemen, each engineman contributed £3 18s. per annum, and each fireman £2 12s. per annum, to an insurance society, while the company only contributed one thirteenth part as much, and for two years had contributed nothing at all, so that the committee of the Society had to give notice of reduced benefits, and the end of payments to widows and orphans.

The men were keenly feeling these conditions, and at a meeting of South Eastern enginemen and firemen, held at Sultan Tavern, Mercers' Crossing, Bermondsey, on Sunday, April 20th, 1878, a report was given of a deputation waiting upon the directors of that company. The directors had agreed to fix a week's work of sixty hours, and that all over sixty hours be paid at the rate of ten hours per day; that all work done between twelve o'clock midnight on Saturday and twelve o'clock midnight on Sunday be paid for at the rate of eight hours per day. That the following be the rates of wages for drivers:—First year, 5s. 6d. per day; second year, 6s. per day; third year, 6s. 6d. per day; fourth year, 7s. per day; after seven years, 7s. 6d. per day. The amount of wages to firemen to remain as at present, excepting that no fireman start at less than 3s. 6d. per day, and must be over 18

years of age. The Board had also promised to be accessible to the men, through the superintendent. It was therefore agreed to form a permanent committee, consisting of eleven drivers and eleven firemen, to present to the superintendent and directors any complaint existing amongst the men. These men were chosen from Bricklayers' Arms, Corwen Street, Deptford, Maidstone, Strood, Woolwich, Redhill, Reading, Tonbridge, Hastings, Dover and Folkestone, Ramsgate, Canterbury and Deal, and Ashford. It was resolved, also, to make a call of a shilling a year on the men on the line to finance the committee.

The record of that meeting is very interesting, not only for its victory, but for its proof of the urgent need of sectional action.

Let us take a sweep from the South Eastern to Scotland, and allude to the evidence of Mr. Geo. Brittain, out-door locomotive superintendent on the Caledonian. He told the Royal Commission on Railway Accidents that drivers on his line were kept out as much as seventeen hours a day for a fortnight together. Hugh Riddock, a driver on the North British, was proved to have worked seventeen hours on Monday, seventeen on Tuesday, fourteen on Wednesday, and eighteen hours each on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. These terrible spells of duty "were not obviously excessive" to his locomotive superintendent.

A driver on the North British, named Weston, complained to his foreman that he found great difficulty in keeping his eyes open.

"I have been on duty sixteen hours a day in succession, and on the third day I went on the engine at 7.30 in the morning and left it as a rule at 11 or 12 at night, if we were in to our time. I ran for 250 miles. In that time I was never allowed to leave the engine. I took my meals and everything on the engine. It was a passenger engine. I never left the engine. I complained to my fireman, and told him that I found difficulty in keeping my eyes open. Upon the third day I said to him that I could not hold myself responsible if anything occurred to the engine or the passengers, and that it was unfair to force us to do it. He reported this to the superintendent, Mr. Wheatley. He

called me up, and said : " Weston, unless you retract those words I will dismiss you." I said : " Mr. Wheatley, you have the power to dismiss me, but I cannot retract what I said." I was compelled to do it, but I told him honestly that in coming home, running for 250 miles, when I came in at night I would find myself falling asleep."

What tragic testimony that is, and the result of the protest was that Weston had the option of being reduced to a branch line or being dismissed the service, and he left.

On the Highland Railway, a driver named Johnson " was on duty from 12.40 p.m. on the Friday till 1 p.m. on the following Monday afternoon." Murder? Yes, plenty of it in all trades to grind out dividends. On the Midland Great Western (Ireland) a witness named Carroll " fell off his box when asleep from exhaustion and want of rest." He had been on continuous duty 43 hours. It was no uncommon thing on that line, he said, for drivers to work 30 or 40 hours consecutively.

Remember, too, that the Companies remained absolutely callous and indifferent, and Capt. Tyler reported :—

" I do not think that the Board of Trade ought to interfere with the railway companies as to the hours of working their men."

Mr. Haswell, of the North Eastern, mentioned the case of a driver and fireman who had worked $17\frac{1}{2}$ hours one day, 17 the next, 15 the next, $18\frac{1}{4}$ the next, and $12\frac{1}{2}$ the next, or $80\frac{1}{4}$ hours in five days. On the Brighton line, Mr. Woodhead gave the case of a driver who " made 89 hours in six days without a Sunday," and another who " worked for 16 hours, and 14 hours, and $20\frac{1}{4}$ hours, and $16\frac{3}{4}$ hours, and $23\frac{1}{4}$ hours, and $16\frac{1}{2}$ hours, in his week."

Frederick Harcombe, a goods guard on the Taff Vale, gave some startling evidence as to long hours on that line, and was asked :—

" Have not the companies a sufficient number of men to work the traffic?—They should have more men, but they work the ones they have. I have seen many young men come and

stop a few days, and then go away as if they had had enough of it."

For saying that, Harcombe was dismissed from the service.

Following the design of this history, there now comes an interval of several years covered by other chapters, which trace the sounding of the first bugle call to arms by the men of Monmouth, Sheffield, and other centres, the formation of the Society, its early struggles and victories, its flattening out of two hypocritical verdicts upon railway accidents, first, that of manslaughter, a monstrous crime in itself by those who dared to attach it to drivers so terribly overworked, and secondly, "The Acts of God," which was a convenient cover for the neglect of companies. These are stories for other chapters, but in this I want to resume the subject of hours and conditions.

On January 23rd of 1891, Mr. Francis Channing moved in the House of Commons :—

"That in the opinion of this House the excessive hours of labour imposed on railwaymen by the existing arrangements of railway companies of the United Kingdom constitute a grave social injustice, and a constant source of danger to the men themselves and to the travelling public, and the Board of Trade should obtain powers by legislation to issue orders, where necessary, directing railway companies to limit the hours of work of a special class of their servants."

More than a decade had passed since the forgotten disclosures I have quoted, and still this awful scandal continued. A Select Committee was appointed to hear evidence, and painful facts were again revealed, but still Parliament merely sanctioned (in 1893) power for the Board of Trade to regulate hours, and another ten years of slave conditions passed by, not quite so awful in their intensity, but still very grave, and we find that in December, 1900, taking the facts relating to engine drivers and firemen on the twelve principal lines of England and Wales, there were 263,369 instances of men working more than twelve hours. A ten hours day was

requested, and Sir Geo. Findlay, for the North Western, accepted that as a fair standard, and agreed that men should be relieved after twelve hours. A Board of Trade inspector quoted cases of fatal accidents through drivers and firemen having "lumbered" after working $16\frac{1}{2}$ and $18\frac{1}{4}$ hours at a stretch. The case of a poor fog signaller was given, cut up after working $23\frac{1}{2}$ hours continuously in a dense fog. Try to picture the mind of that poor man! A goods guard on the L. & N.W. was killed on a dark, stormy night after working 22 hours and 18 minutes consecutively. On eleven days out of 24 previous to his death he had averaged 19 hours and 11 minutes work per day. Five drivers on the L. & Y. showed an average during January, 1891, of 19 to 21 hours daily duty. Major Marinden commented that "Up to the present time, or nearly so, the companies have not been in earnest in trying to reduce working hours." It was found that a witness, John Hood, a stationmaster on the Cambrian line, had been reprimanded and discharged by his directors after giving evidence on overwork. Many previous witnesses had shared the same fate, but circumstances were forcing Parliament out of its old contempt for labour. There was an indignant protest over this intolerable action, and the result was that the General Manager and two of his directors had to appear at the Bar of the House as offenders, and to be admonished by the Speaker. A Board of Trade return for December 31st, 1901, showed the following:—

109,280	men	were	on	duty	13	hours.
58,062	"	"	"	"	14	"
20,937	"	"	"	"	15	"
13,296	"	"	"	"	16	"
6,557	"	"	"	"	17	"
8,087	"	"	"	"	18	" or over.

After a rest period ranging only from one to eight hours, 20,976 men had been called to resume work. In 1903 there were over 99,500 cases of overworked men on a single day. In 1907 there were numerous cases of men working 18 to 24 hours continuous

duty. Still, the grim story was petering out under resistance and exposure.

Let us look at a twin subject, wages, for a moment, under 1907 conditions. There were then over 16,000 men getting no overtime pay whatever for their excessive hours, and 103,700 were getting ordinary time rates, while 85,000 rejoiced in time and a quarter. There were 14,276 cleaners on an average weekly wage of 14s. 8d. ; 25,518 firemen on a weekly average of 24s., and 25,900 drivers, the best-paid men of the general service, averaged 38s. 10d. Joseph Thornhill, a L. & N.W. driver at Swansea, with 37 years experience, wrote that ten drivers and ten firemen were in his link, and the firemen received 3s. 6d. a day, and the drivers from 5s. 6d. to 7s. a day, for ten hours. Joseph Thornhill was discharged after making that statement.

Forty years earlier a "Daily Telegraph" representative sent a message which was still true in 1900 :—

"The reason why there are not ten accidents where we have one is the praiseworthy pluck and perseverance of thousands of poor fellows, who, with a noble sense of enormous trust imposed upon them, have not permitted either abuse, tyranny, or oppression to impoverish their integrity or honesty."

When a Leeds guard protested against being sent to London after 18 hours duty he was bluntly told "There are 24 hours in the day and they are all ours." But the most frightful case I have discovered is that of a disaster to a North Western train at Tamworth, when driver, fireman, and passengers went headlong into the river, and it transpired that the poor signalman had been on duty 68 hours consecutively !

There, let us turn from this heartbreaking stuff to something brighter. Let us see how a way was found out of this darkness of night.

CHAPTER VIII

The Hexthorpe Disaster Trial—Taylor and Davies Acquitted—
A Great Victory—Growth of the Society—North Eastern
and Great Western Wage Movements—Advice Against
Strikes—Messages from America—The L. & N.W. in
1890—New Rules of 1889.

I CAN well imagine a few of the oldest members thinking to themselves as they read the last chapter, "But you have forgotten the Hexthorpe Trial." No, it is not forgotten, it is only deferred. To gather up the history of the Society is like gathering up a thousand threads to be woven together, and some little classifying into sections is needed. The Hexthorpe disaster, and the subsequent trial at York Assizes of Brothers Taylor and Davies, the driver and fireman, on a charge of manslaughter, was really an outstanding event in the history of the Society. This fatal collision on the M.S. & L. followed hard upon the Midland strike in that famous Jubilee year 1887, and it would never have happened if the continuous automatic brake system had been in operation. The defence of the two members was in the care of Messrs. Ford & Warren, who found themselves facing all the custom and prejudice which had proved so hard upon drivers in similar accidents in the earlier history of railways. The defence was successful, for Taylor and Davies were acquitted of that serious charge, and the news of it came as an intense joy and relief to members all over the country. Over two thousand of them signed a letter of appreciation and thanks to the solicitors for their very

notable victory on behalf of all enginemmen. The trial and defence cost the Society over £295, but, said the next annual report, "We feel we have been amply repaid, for we secured the acquittal of our members, and a large influx of members has been our reward. The books show an increase of 474 members, in addition to seven new branches opened in the year."

The following letter was addressed by the Society to Mr. W. Warren, the solicitor in charge of the case, after the close of the trial :—

17, MILL HILL CHAMBERS,

LEEDS,

January 14th, 1888.

SIR,

I am requested by nearly two thousand members of our Society, belonging to the branches appended, to express to you and the other legal and professional gentlemen engaged in the defence of Taylor and Davies, in connection with the Hexthorpe trial, their high appreciation of your distinguished abilities in bringing about such gratifying results, and trust that you will kindly convey the same.

I remain, on behalf of the members of Liverpool, Stockport, Leeds, Plymouth, York, Sheffield, Mexborough, Lincoln, Llanelly, Bristol, Neath, Cardiff, Exeter, Pontypool, Nottingham, Newport, Peterborough, Oxford, London, Wolverhampton, Retford, Gloucester, Birmingham, Manchester, Grimsby, and Bradford,

Yours respectfully,

T. G. SUNTER,

General Secretary.

The whole body of drivers and firemen of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway Company also subscribed a letter to the-solicitor, saying :—

"We no sooner saw them put in fetters than one and all we

G.

rushed to their relief, and at once sought your powerful aid to release them, and fortunate indeed were we to find that your able services were at our disposal. We are proud to congratulate you upon the valiant manner in which you conducted them through the ordeal through which they had to pass, and brought them out scatheless, and by so doing brought joy and happiness back again to those homes and families which to all outward appearance had been almost forlorn and destitute. Never, therefore, can we forget the great sympathy you evinced towards them, and the indefatigable zeal you displayed to bring about so glorious and successful an issue."

It may be of interest if I recall the simple facts of the Hexthorpe disaster. In consequence of the extra traffic to Doncaster Races, the M.S. & L. Company adopted the very dangerous policy of suspending the use of the block system, instead of introducing extra block signal boxes. The starting signal was off for the M.S. & L. express, in charge of Taylor and Davies, to come round the curve from the Junction Box to the ticket platform. The curve, and the bridge over the line, obstructed the driver's view of the Midland train standing at the ticket platform until he was within 359 yards. The express was only provided with Smith's simple vacuum brake, which failed to act, as it had often failed to act before, and terrible loss of life resulted. The Company, and not the driver, ought to have been indicted for manslaughter, but even after acquittal of the two men, there was difficulty in getting them re-instated.

The influx of new members noticed in the year 1887 after the Hexthorpe trial continued during 1888, and the balance sheet for that year, which also gave for the first time the branch balance sheets, said the Society was getting over the severe financial strain of last year, and "we are now in a more prosperous financial and numerical strength than at any time in the Society's history. The income from all sources was £4,510 18s. 3d., and the total funds are £10,946, the gross expenditure being £2,671 7s. 10d., showing a

gain of £1,838 on the year, and leaving the Society with a capital of £8,274 17s. 6d. At the beginning of the year we had over 100 members out of employment (principally late Midland employees), and their out-of-work benefits came to £299 4s. A large number found work abroad, and emigration grants cost the Society £125 10s." The superannuation benefits cost the Society £150 19s. that year, including a grant of £20 to a member knocked down by a passenger train at St. Pancras, and losing an arm. This incapacitation grant was subsequently increased to £100. The legal costs exceeded £85, chiefly involved in a recovery from the Midland Railway of compensation for the widow of Driver James Branner, killed during fog at Kentish Town shed. The jury found for £320, the amount claimed, and attributed negligence to the company, and excluded the driver from all blame. This notable award caused counsel for the company to claim the verdict, because their servant was not guilty of blame.

The year 1888 was notable, too, for the decision to issue a Society "Journal," which had been mooted several times, and which proved a complete success. It reached a circulation of 4,000 copies, and left a balance of £2 on the year for the Society's funds. Thirteen new branches were opened in the year, and 704 new members enrolled. It should be remembered that the Midland strike had lost the Society 403 members, but the close of 1888 found 2,368 members on the books, a net increase of 301. "Since that time," added the report, "our growth has been most rapid, a sure indication that our members are becoming increasingly alive to the necessity and usefulness of a trade union for locomotive workers." This report was the first issued from the new (the third) head office of the Society, 44, Park Square, and one of the auditors who signed it was Albert Fox, who was subsequently destined to figure as General Secretary.

Looking over the systems, there were wage movements under the various companies in the same year. For example, a meeting of North Eastern men held at Newcastle presented the following programme :—

For engine drivers, 5s. per day ; after six months, 5s. 6d. ; after one year, 5s. 9d. ; third year, 6s. ; fourth year, 6s. 3d. ; fifth year, 6s. 6d. ; sixth year, 6s. 9d. ; seventh year, 7s. ; express drivers, 7s. 6d. per day.

Firemen : Commence at 3s. per day ; after six months, 3s. 4d. ; one year, 3s. 6d. ; third year, 3s. 9d. ; fourth year, 4s. ; fifth year, 4s. 2d. ; sixth year, 4s. 4d. ; seventh year, 4s. 6d. ; if firing over 12 years, 4s. 9d. per day. Ten hours to constitute a day in all cases ; overtime beyond ten hours at time and a quarter rate.

"Your employees desire," continued the petition, "that you will kindly consider their responsible, arduous, and dangerous duties, and that you will grant the requests contained in the above programme, and to prevent dispute we desire that printed copies of all working arrangements made between you and ourselves shall be placed by each department in a position on the Company's premises where they can be seen when required."

In the course of this history we have seen such programmes before. They were very modest, but very lightly treated by directors.

The Great Western enginemen's and firemen's movement came to the front again in 1889, for in October of that year a meeting of delegates was held at the Phoenix Inn, Totterdown, Bristol, at which Mr. H. Parfitt presided, Mr. C. Watkins being in the vice-chair, and Mr. A. Griffiths acting as secretary. The third resolution carried, the one of central importance, was :—

"That an appeal be made to Mr. Dean, to which each man's signature be attached, asking Mr. Dean to accept a deputation of enginemen and firemen with respect to the regulation of hours and wages, and that the resolution passed at this meeting be attached."

The charter of the Great Western men, to be backed by the deputation, was in the following terms :—

MEMORIAL FROM THE ENGINEMEN AND FIREMEN
EMPLOYED ON THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

(OCTOBER, 1889.)

To the Honourable Board of Directors.

GENTLEMEN,

Your Memorialists approach you under circumstances which cause them much sincere regret. It has not been without much deliberation, individually and collectively, they have again resolved to lay before you the grievances of which they complain, trusting you will give them a favourable and early consideration, with a view to their amicable settlement. We sincerely regret that after an experience of ten years of classification, we now find ourselves more unsettled than ever. We therefore respectfully submit the following scale of hours and wages as one calculated to give satisfaction to all Enginemen and Firemen in your honourable service, and we also ask that a deputation of Enginemen and Firemen may be received to state their grievances.

PROPOSED REGULATIONS.

1st.—That all Enginemen and Firemen be paid at the rate of ten hours per day. That the number of miles be limited to about 150 miles for through passenger, and 120 miles for local passenger and goods trains per day.

2nd.—That the hours of duty be reckoned from “booking on” to “booking off” duty.

3rd.—Eight hours to be taken as a shed day.

4th.—That one hour be allowed in all cases for getting an engine ready, the time to commence one hour before the engine is due to leave the shed.

5th.—All men booked on duty six times in one week to receive not less than six days pay.

6th.—That all classification of work be abolished.

7th.—Scale of wages :—

REGISTERED FIREMEN :

1st Year	3s. 0d. per day.	4th Year	4s. 0d. per day.
2nd „	3s. 6d. „	5th „	4s. 3d. „
3rd „	3s. 9d. „	6th „	4s. 6d. „

ENGINEMEN :

1st Year	5s. 0d. per day.	6th Year	7s. 0d. per day.
2nd „	5s. 6d. „	7th „	7s. 0d. „
3rd „	6s. 0d. „	8th „	7s. 0d. „
4th „	6s. 6d. „	9th „	7s. 0d. „
5th „	6s. 6d. „	10th „	7s. 6d. „

Turners and Shunting Enginemen to be abolished.

8th.—That promotion throughout the entire system be by seniority, except in cases of men disqualified by incapacity or misconduct.

9th.—Firemen employed as Enginemen to be paid at the rate of 5s. per day.

10th.—A premium of £10 for good conduct to be allowed at the end of the first year at 7s. per day, and annually afterwards.

11th.—The ordinary allowance for Lodgings to be at the rate of 1s. 6d. per day, but all men working Special on two home work and all exceptional cases to be allowed 2s. 6d.

12th.—That time and a half be paid for all work between midnight on Saturday and midnight on Sunday, irrespective of booking on or off duty.

13th.—Enginemen and Firemen residing in London to receive 2s. 6d. per week in addition to their ordinary pay.

14th.—Men coming on duty by order, whose services are not required through trains being stopped, to receive half a day's pay.

15th.—A top-coat to be given to each Engineman and Fireman once in two years. If a man leaves the service he shall return the last coat he receives to the company.

Trusting to the justice of your Honourable Board to settle this long vexed question to the satisfaction of your Memorialists.

We beg to remain your obedient servants,

THE ENGINEMEN AND FIREMEN.

The most satisfactory feature about it is the more dignified language in which it is couched ; in that respect it showed a marked advance upon the style of " your petitioners will ever pray," etc., as used ten years earlier. The deputation, of which Mr. Parfitt was one, was received in quite a friendly manner, but it failed to pull off the programme. You shall see Mr. Parfitt's own story of these early efforts presently.

The year 1889 was one of splendid progress for the Society. The income from all sources was £5,843 9s. 11d., and the gross expenditure for the year was £3,298 7s. 5d., leaving the Society at the end of the year with a capital of £10,820. New branches had been opened at West Brompton, Doncaster, Boston, Hulme, Barnsley, Guildford, Shrewsbury, Didcot, Swindon and Taunton, and there had been a total increase of 1,232 members, " by far the largest increase gained in one year during the Society's history. We feel sure it will be eclipsed in 1890."

Let us look at once at the tenth annual report, the one for 1890, which records: " Very satisfactory progress has been made both in finance and in the numerical strength of the Society. The total income was £8,407, and expenditure for all purposes during the year has been £4,271, leaving a clear gain to the Society of £4,136, and a balance at the end of 1890 of £14,956." Sickness claims had been very severe that year, as a result of prolonged frost and fog in the winter, and some branches had to obtain advances from the general fund to meet liabilities. Out-of-work relief was granted 45 members owing to the " unfortunate " strike in South Wales, alluded to later. Commenting on this episode, the report says :—

" Members should prevent as far as possible these unfortunate strikes. In most cases they only embitter the feelings of employers towards the employed. With a strong body of men

like enginemmen we can secure our aims without such rash measures. During the year the railway companies have made large dividends, and in some cases have made considerable concessions to their servants. Many things require remedy, like Sunday labour, guarantee of a full week, better protection from the weather when on the footplate, etc. It is to be regretted that some modern advocates of trade unions argue in favour of trade unions being used for attack and defence only. This principle was tried years ago on our railways and failed. Enginemmen and firemen know full well that a trade union pure and simple will not meet all their requirements. This has been proved by the attempts made in years gone by. The founders of our Association were men of very considerable railway experience, who saw the necessity of friendly society and trade union combined. The latter offers a protection to the workman in his employment or in misfortune, while the former acts as his almoner in time of sickness and affliction. The two combined are an attraction to young men to join the Society. Whilst fulfilling those conditions the financial responsibility of the Society to these members compels the majority to move cautiously in matters affecting their labour, obtaining by diplomacy what the aggressive union attempts to secure by force. The one acts as incentive to the other, and the two combined strengthen the whole body, and create a continued interest throughout the organisation, whilst its financial stability compels moderation instead of being prompted by those who appeal to passion, irrespective of results that will follow to those directly affected."

That very nice homily of 1890 is followed by the announcement that the "Journal" circulation had reached 4,300, the membership was 5,039, and the increase of members for the year was 1,439, the record hoped for. The items of expenditure for the year included a grant of £300 towards the Scottish railway strike, and £10 10s. for a model engine and box, obtained at last.

The year covered in that report, the year 1889, was also memorable for the fact that in December, Eugene V. Debs wrote from America

expressing thanks for having received emblems of honorary membership of the A.S.L.E. & F. for F. P. Sargent, Grand Master ; J. J. Hannahan, Vice Grand Master, and for himself as Grand Secretary and Treasurer of the American Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen. "We esteem this honour highly," wrote Debs, "not only for ourselves, but for the brotherhood which we have the honour and privilege to represent. The high compliment you have conferred upon us expands indefinitely in value, because it voices the sentiments of fraternity and mutual interest, which neither oceans, mountains, lakes nor any other boundary can limit, and which I trust is preparing the mind of all thinking men to accept the dogma that 'The brotherhood of men and fatherhood of God' is something more and better than a delusion."

Exactly thirty years to the day have passed between the writing of that letter and my copying from it. In the interval Debs has suffered much, even long imprisonment, for his ideals. Wars that were the world's record for horror have been waged since then, and Governments are still preparing for future wars. Have we—you and I individually—stood by that brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God, which Debs wrote of in 1889?

A few months later Sir Daniel Gooch died, and I mention him because he was the first chief adviser to an English railway to give employees (not societies) the right of access to the board of management. He had been appointed locomotive superintendent to the Great Western Railway at the age of 21 years, having served his time in George Stephenson's works. He was chairman of the famous Great Eastern Steamship Company, which in 1865 laid 4,000 tons of cable and lost it all. The next year he sailed again on the same great ship, and on July 27th of 1866 was able to cable the message to Lord Stanley: "Perfect communication established between England and America; God grant it will be a lasting source of benefit to our country."

There, America has twice crept into our history, and I must be cautious against embracing the men of all nations into our record, for actually they do touch it. Let me now give a glimpse of a

big railway undertaking in 1890. Take the London & North Western, then undoubtedly the biggest of them all, and the greatest Corporation in the world. A hundred millions of money had been spent in buying and building its 1,850 miles of line, its railway carriages, engines, and waggons. It had 45,000 employees, and its expenses were six millions per annum, with gross earnings of eleven millions. The population of Crewe and a few other places practically turned upon the L. & N.W. It had a staff of 7,000 men to build and repair its five million pounds worth of locomotives, and the Crewe workshops turned out every requisite for a railway, from a coal-scuttle to bridges and rails. It had 1,400 signal boxes, from which 16,000 signals were worked. These signals required wires enough to stretch from Liverpool to New York. The annual printing bill was £60,000, and the annual tailor's bill was £25,000. For the 55 million miles run by engines, coal was used at an average rate of 40 pounds per mile, and oil and tallow cost £70,000 a year. Its 5,000 passenger coaches would seat 164,000 passengers, and there were eleven times as many trucks as coaches to build and keep in order at the waggon works, which covered 35 acres at Earlstown, and at the carriage factory at Wolverton, covering 50 acres. To such vast dimensions had a single railway company developed by 1890.

The Society had established its benevolent fund at the Triennial Conference held at Leeds in 1889, and had appointed Mr. Shuttleworth as assistant to the secretary. Efforts were authorised to secure the amalgamation of the Locomotive Steam Engineers & Firemen's Sick Society, and similar societies at Nottingham, Burton, and Derby. At the 1886 Conference the entrance fees were altered to the following scale :—

18 years, and not exceeding	25	...	2s. 6d.
25 " " "	30	...	5s.
30 " " "	35	...	7s. 6d.
35 " " "	40	...	10s.
To Protection Fund at any age		...	2s.

The third day of this Conference continued from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., and " afterwards " a general discussion took place on the desirability of a widows' and orphans' fund. It was brought before branches, and the Benevolent Fund of 1889 was the result. A change which was coming over the working conditions at the time was the steady abolition of the system of fines and suspensions for alleged offences. As companies discovered the men really had a strong society, and a sum of £10,000 behind them, and that unjust fines and suspension losses were paid back, the companies resorted to an alternative method of reducing rates of pay, and the 1889 Conference had to find special means of dealing with that practice. It will be noticed, too, that entrants beyond 40 years of age were not catered for. This exclusion was due to a discovery of the large-hearted error of the founders. It was possible, during the first eight years, for an elderly worker to join, to pay a matter of £1 in regular contributions for eighteen months, and then to fall back on superannuation at £13 a year. As this possibility was made use of, it endangered the solvency of the Society, and a remedy was devised as stated in 1889.

We have now passed, therefore, through the period of evolution of railways, and through the evolution of societies, but decidedly not through the evolution of decent hours, wages and conditions for the men piloting this great institution. The typical figure representative of railway life is the driver, and it is his fortune and his organised effort we will follow through the years.

CHAPTER IX

Wages and Engine Power—The Taff Vale Strike—Select Committee on Railway Workers' Hours—An Associated Programme—The Miners' Strike of 1893—Fines and Suspensions—A Year of Testing.

ANOTHER circular was sent out by Mr. Wm. Dean (G.W.R.) on August 5th of 1890. It was of a more acceptable nature than the one mentioned in an earlier page, and it was a reply to the Memorial signed by two thousand men. After mentioning the increases in rates of wages granted in the previous December, and the concession of extra payment for Sunday work, it proceeded to guarantee the long demanded six days week for "men sent temporarily to Penzance, Weymouth, New Milford, and other stations for the fish and vegetables or other special traffic." The directors also withdrew the limitation of £2,000 on their annual contribution to the Enginemen and Firemen's Friendly Society, and paid to it a sum of £1,030 for the half-year ending June 30th, 1890, at the rate of 3d. per week per member. The directors were not prepared to allow any further alterations in the conditions of service, as "the cost per train mile of enginemen and firemen has increased from 1½d. in the year 1867 to 2¼d., representing an increase in the cost of working of 50 per cent., a rate of advance which is without parallel in any other branch of the service."

But there was another side to this story of increase without parallel, for at that time, and until long after 1900, engines were being built to bigger size, and the weight of trains enormously increased.

This process continued year by year, and while chairmen of companies and locomotive superintendents publicly spoke on the increased cost per train mile for engines, they were silent about the other side of the story, which secured greater service at less cost, and caused engine drivers and firemen to do more work for less pay than they were getting twenty years before. The physical and mental strain caused by these monsters was exhausting men, and year after year in the nineties the annual reports of our Society were vivid reminders of the sad effects. Sick pay rose alarmingly, until an income of £3,000 had to meet an expenditure of £4,000. That refers to the Sick Fund only, at a period when some branches averaged £2 per member in their claims. But the Society continued its run of infinite prosperity, as you shall see.

In November of 1889 the General Secretary had sent a letter of thanks to Mr. F. W. Webb, locomotive superintendent of the London & North Western Railway, for advancing the wages of their enginemen and firemen sixpence per day, "and to inform him that it is our earnest desire that the best relations shall always exist between the enginemen and firemen and the locomotive superintendents." Just a few weeks after the expression of these pious desires came rumours of discontent developing on the Taff Vale line, and by July of 1890 a ferment was taking place down there. The Executive of the Society was specially summoned to meet on August 3rd "to consider the pending dispute on the Taff Vale, Rhymney, and Barry Docks Railways." Letters were read from Mr. E. Horford, Mr. C. D. Hawkins, the Cardiff Trades Council, and the Cardiff branch secretary, as well as from members in Tondy, Aberdare, and other affected centres. It was resolved:—

"1. That we regret that the Society was not consulted previous to notices on the Taff Vale Railway being sent in to cease work.

"2. We consider that to bring a matter of such great importance to a successful issue, it is absolutely necessary that the opinion of men on adjacent railways should first have been obtained, and seeing this has not been done, we consider they would be

greatly affected, and considering the great number of enginemen and firemen in the county, we are of opinion that the present time would be inopportune for the men to strike.

"3. We strongly urge our members not to strike, but to act strictly to the rules of the Society, and not be led away by men unacquainted with the duties of enginemen and firemen.

"4. Any member refusing to work without the consent of the Society Executive, as per Rule 20, Clause I., shall not be entitled to any benefits."

This mandate, however, did not cool the indignation of the Taff Vale men, and they struck work. On August 31st, after the struggle was over, the Executive "Resolved that we grant to all our members who were affected by the Taff Vale Railway strike an equivalent to strike pay, and the secretary of Cardiff branch be instructed to pay them."

There was just time to pull in a discussion and decision upon a proposal for amalgamation or federation of the railway unions (there have been several such), before Scotland drew all attention, because of the 1891 strike on the railways in that "bonnie land beyond the Tweed." First let us settle amalgamation as briefly as the Executive settled it (November 30th, 1890) :—

"Resolved that, after reading the memorandum of agreement entered into between the four secretaries of the railway societies on November 24th, 1890, viz. : Edward Harford, A.S.R.S. ; H. Tait, A.S.R.S. of S. ; Charles Watson, G.R.W.U. ; and T. G. Sunter, A.S.L.E. & F. ; we do not allow our General Secretary to attend any meetings convened by the other kindred societies until the aforesaid societies have submitted their proposals for federation, and they have been agreed to by us as an Executive, and the General Secretary write and inform other secretaries of our decision."

January of 1891 saw the heat of strife in Scotland, and a grant of £300 from the Executive to help those taking part.

A Select Committee was appointed by the House of Commons,

early in 1891, to inquire into the question whether railway workers' hours should be reduced by legislation as previously alluded to. The Society was invited to give evidence, and at a special Executive, held on March 1st, it was "Proposed by M. J. Dickinson, and seconded by J. Watkinson, that with a view to ascertaining the opinion of the various branches on the question of hours and wages, also whether the branches are desirous that our Society should take any action or part in giving evidence before the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the long hours, etc., of railwaymen, that the following letter be sent to branches for their consideration, and a reply asked for :—

FELLOW MEMBERS,

We, the Executive Committee, desire to bring before your notice the agitation existing in various industries throughout the United Kingdom, also that in consequence of the same Parliament is now appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into conditions of labour, but, so far as enginemen and firemen are concerned, we think that by far the best results would be obtained by interviewing the local superintendent and railway directors, with a view to those improvements in our conditions of service which we consider necessary, believing that by a conciliatory policy it will help to foster a good feeling between employers and employed. For we, as practical men, know that it is impossible during dense fogs and breakdowns to arrange for men to finish work at ten or twelve hours, and if we insist upon it being done in ordinary circumstances it would necessitate considerably more lodging away from home, which is an evil in itself. Again, during the winter months the companies would require more hands if all men were reduced to a bare six days per week, but during the summer months men would only get from three to four days weekly, seeing that the companies do not at present guarantee a full week's pay or work, or they would be compelled to discharge a good many of their men. We would ask you, then, if you will consider well the following, and if by so

doing your interests would not be best served by the adoption of the same :—

- 1.—Interview the various locomotive superintendents and directors that all companies' men may have similar conditions of service, viz. : ten hours day and eight hours overtime, and each day to stand by itself.
- 2.—A week's work to be guaranteed to all men if fit and ready for work.
- 3.—That all Sunday work, i.e., from twelve midnight Saturday to twelve midnight Sunday, be paid for at the rate of seven hours per day, and exclusive of the week's work.
- 4.—That nine hours be allowed off duty as far as practicable.
- 5.—That each man be appointed by seniority of service.
- 6.—That 150 miles constitute a day's work for passenger trains, all over that number to be paid for at overtime rates.
- 7.—Passenger drivers, 8s. per day ; first year drivers, 6s. ; second year drivers, 7s. ; fifth year drivers, 7s. 6d. ; passenger firemen, 5s. per day ; other firemen, first year, 4s. ; second year, 4s. 6d. ; fifth year, 5s., until passed as a driver ; sixpence per day extra in London for both drivers and firemen.

The views of branches are invited upon this programme.

Very naturally, the branches decided in favour of the programme, and allowed the Select Committee to go by default. But the Executive had, in my view, made a mistake, and I fancy the Executives of 1910 to 1920 would have gone a firmer way about it. They would have asked for a programme to be endorsed to lay before the Committee, along with trenchant evidence of enginemen's conditions, which were grievous in the extreme in those days. An opportunity was missed, and, as a result, evidence which might have been on record is not on record. The letter to branches says that the agitation existed in several industries, and it should have been backed up. It advises branches to obtain interviews with directors who would not recognise the Society, and, following on the decision, it sharply



First Emblem issued by the Society.

checked those branches, notably on the M.S. & L., which yearned to lay the facts before the Select Committee.

On November 15th of 1891 it was proposed by C. Woodhead, and seconded by J. Hawksley, "That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable that an amicable understanding should, if possible, be arrived at by the enginemen and firemen and the locomotive superintendents of our various railways, and with that object in view, our General Secretary write to Sir Henry Oakley, Secretary of the Railway Association, asking him if he would give the matter his kind consideration, and, if possible, for him to arrange for a deputation from our Society to meet either himself (Sir Henry) or the Committee of the Railway Association, with a view to arriving at a fair regulation of hours of duty, etc. We would prefer to discuss the matter with our employers, rather than have to resort to State interference."

Then, provided that Sir Henry was good enough to receive them, Messrs. Sunter, Dickinson, and Rushworth were appointed a deputation to lay the National Programme before him. Well, after Taff Vale and Scotland, I expected to find no fruit of the enterprise, and there was none. Fines, suspensions, and mean little penalties went on, and State interference had to come at last, sixteen years later, to curb the companies. I am not overlooking the fact that only two years later Parliament conferred certain powers on the Board of Trade to interfere in the matter of regulating hours of labour on the railways, but it meant very little indeed, and sweated conditions continued for twenty years later.

The Committee itself dealt with two sections of railway workers :—

- 1.—Those occupying fixed posts of duty, like signalmen, shunters, platelayers, and porters.
- 2.—Drivers, firemen, and guards.

The Committee heard certain evidence, and declined to recommend any legal day, but left to the companies the arrangement of hours and discipline, although "they must be induced by the Board of Trade to confine the hours of railwaymen within reasonable limits."

At the time of this decision, in August of 1891, Mr. Henry Shuttleworth was appointed Assistant Secretary to the Society, at the rate of 35s. weekly. To accept this post he tendered his resignation of the position he had held so long as Chairman of the Executive, and Mr. Moses John Dickinson, a most faithful member, was made chairman in his place. In February of 1892, Mr. Geo. Rushworth resigned his position as General Treasurer, and in accepting his resignation the Committee "Tender to him our best thanks for his past services, and regret that his health will not permit him to retain the position. We further desire to present him with a life-size oil-painting of himself, as a mark of esteem and respect, the cost not to exceed £10." Mr. Wm. Amey became General Treasurer in succession to Mr. Rushworth, who had held the office since the commencement of the Society, and now became the recipient of a marble clock and other tokens of gratitude. In the same year, too, Mr. Wm. Ulllyott, of Sheffield, the first member of the Society, was presented by the M.S. & L. members with an engraved walking stick, a purse of fourteen sovereigns, and a tea-urn for Mrs. Ulllyott, as an expression of thanks for long years of service as their delegate. I might mention here that Mr. Ulllyott survived until 1914, and was able to see the Society of which he formed the first unit grow to a strength of 36,000. Also, in 1892, Mr. Perry, founder of the Society, was feted at Cardiff, and became reminiscent over the conquest ten years had wrought.

The term of office of the Executive which we have been discussing concluded on October 31st, 1892, and at the close of the minutes we find this record: "This concludes their term of office, as per General Rule 3, and all their actions endorsed by a delegate meeting held at the Green Dragon Hotel, Leeds, on November 1st to 5th inclusive.—(Signed) M. J. Dickinson, Chairman." It was this retiring Executive which decided to recognise the services rendered by Mr. C. E. Stretton as consulting engineer to the Society, and to express a desire that he should accept £20, or accept the same value in some other form. Mr. Stretton, who had been generosity itself to two of the railway societies, elected to receive an illuminated

address, which was duly executed and presented at an open meeting at Leeds.

The Delegate Meeting referred to above had elected a new Executive, which came into office on March 19th of 1893, the old Executive conducting business in the meantime, and meeting jointly with the new members in March. This newly-elected Executive was constituted as follows :—

EVAN EVANS	-	-	-	West of England.
T. HARRIS	-	-	-	Midland Counties.
H. PARFITT	-	-	-	South Wales.
F. GREEN	-	-	-	London.
J. GOUGH	-	-	-	Lancashire
S. S. MOGG	-	-	-	York and Scottish.
M. J. DICKINSON	-	-	-	Leeds Branches (Trustee).
RICHARD HATTON	-	-	-	„ „ „

Mr. Harry Parfitt was unanimously elected chairman, with Mr. J. Gough as vice-chairman. They decided to increase the payment of executive members to a more respectable figure, which they fixed at 8s. per day and expenses for distant members, and 4s. per day and no expenses for resident members. They had scarcely taken office when they had to cope with all the difficulties of the miners' strike of that year, and decided to meet the emergency of many of their own members, unemployed as a consequence of it, by making up a special grant to bring all wages up to 18s. weekly for those full members who did not earn so much, half-benefit members being allowed half that sum.

The Society continued to make very satisfactory progress during this period. The Eleventh Annual Report, for the year 1891, showed a total of 84 branches, the twelve new ones opened that year being Trowbridge, Willesden, Wakefield, Southall, Horwick, Low Moor, Southampton, Hull, Crewe, Brighton, Carlisle, and Glasgow. There was an increase of 1,161 members, 874 of whom were for full benefits. The balance in hand stood at £20,730. "We are also pleased to notice," said that Report, "that on several

railway companies there is a disposition on the part of locomotive superintendents to listen to representatives of our members, and to grant some concessions. Although they may not be altogether satisfactory, yet we think it is preferable to accept the advances offered than to run the risk of any serious conflict, even if results are not so satisfactory as we could wish for."

"A great deal has been said about giving evidence before the Select Committee on railway working. It will be remembered that a circular letter was sent to branches asking them if they were in favour of giving evidence, or if their interests would not be better served by interviewing the locomotive superintendent or directors, with a view to reducing working hours to ten daily as far as practicable. The branches were practically unanimous that it would be best to get an assurance direct from the officials that hours would be reduced as near to ten per day as possible."

A serious epidemic of influenza caused sick pay to rise to £2,277. It is interesting to note that the six superannuated members that year included Geo. Rushworth, of Leeds, first Treasurer of the Society. Other railway societies bitterly assailed the growing stability of the Associated, and the grounds chosen for these attacks were exceedingly foolish. For example, opponents started the rumour that the Associated was started by a lot of old men to enable them to get provision for themselves, whereas, although it was open to all enginemen and firemen from 1880 to 1883, irrespective of age, only three men over 60 years of age joined, and only 13 over 50 years. The average age of full benefit members was 32 years, and of those who joined in 1890 (numbering 874) the average age was 25 years.

Strong complaint was being made at the time about the system of fines and suspensions as being cruelly unjust. "If men are to be fined," declared Mr. Sunter, "it should only be done after a thorough investigation by representatives of the company and the men. It is a very serious matter for a man to be fined a day's wages, and in some cases even £5, and in some cases suspended, for not being at the call of companies by day and night seven days

a week, when the companies only pay men for time actually worked. As they demand all time, it is only fair they should pay a full week's wage, instead of only a few shillings for working short time. In the event of a man leaving or being discharged from the company, the company should give such a person, if required, a statement of his services without writing across it 'not to be used in the United Kingdom.' That is serfdom, and would not be tolerated amongst any other class of workmen in the country."

There was only too much ground to fear that many of the fines referred to were imposed upon drivers on the evidence of other grades, who cloaked their own errors by resorting to the expedient of reporting against the driver.

The end of the year 1892 saw a total membership of 6,710, four new branches, and a balance in hand of £26,488. The companies had during that year reduced working time to four days weekly, and as the cost of living was increasing, men were finding it impossible to pay their trade union subscriptions out of the pittance they received. On the matter of regulation of hours it was held that men had no right to ask Parliament to do for them what they ought to do for themselves. In that year £308 were paid in out-of-work benefit, and fines and suspensions returned amounted to £231.

These fines and suspensions had risen to £284 in the year 1893, often imposed for irregularities which ought to have been charged to other sections. Enginemen and firemen were still working only three or four days weekly, a condition attributed to the unfortunate stoppage of miners, which also had a serious effect on the financial progress of the Society. For example, the first half of the year saw an increase of 500 in the membership, but many of those thrown out of employment before they were in benefit fell out again owing to poverty, leaving a net increase for the year of only 305, making a total membership of 7,015. The strike cost the Society £850 in out-of-work pay to members, and £100 was granted to the Miners' Federation. Yet, though the expenditure for that trying year 1893 was high, the Society closed it with a balance of £32,484.

“We hear a great deal about a living wage,” says the Annual Report of that year, “and if any class of workmen have a right to it, it is the men under rules which state that we shall reside where we are required, and shall devote all our time to their service, liable to be called upon night or day, and yet in many instances men are working two or three days weekly. All miles run over 150 by passenger train, and over 120 by goods train, should be paid for at overtime rates. We have also the grievance of lodging away from home, which is itself a moral evil.” It is important to note here that the conditions Mr. Sunter referred to respecting mileage payment had been in operation on the L. & N.W. since 1872.

CHAPTER X

Mr. Parfitt's Recollections—The First Representative E.C.—The Society in London—Taff Vale Trouble—A Proud Position—England's Wealthiest Society—The Orphan Fund—Events of Jubilee Year—The Engineers' Strike—Talk of Federation.

THIS would be a fitting period, seeing that we have just seen Mr. Henry Parfitt installed as Chairman of the Executive, to draw upon the recollections of that experienced member. When Mr. Parfitt knew that I was engaged for this task he readily gave me an interview, and that interview lasted a week, and it covered forty years of activity. Until he retired in December of 1919, Mr. Parfitt was our senior organiser, and in 1880 he joined the Neath branch on its opening night. He was founder of the Society in London, and was for several years Secretary of the Paddington branch. He was Chairman of Plymouth branch, and five years Secretary of Aberdare branch. He was Vice-President of Leeds Conference in 1886, President of the Conference in 1892, Chairman of the Executive 1893 to 1896, and has been in continuously close contact with the activities of the Society. Parfitt was born on November 15th, 1852, and took up railway service in 1873, and completed thirty years service as cleaner, fireman, and driver for the G.W.R. in 1903, when he was elected organiser, and continued in that capacity for seventeen years.

Such a long and varied experience made Mr. Parfitt a fountain of knowledge and bright incident, and my task was one of severe reduction from a hundred pages of shorthand notes. There was no railway

union in being when Parfitt began his cleaning at Newport. He became a pilot fireman, and in 1875 was posted fireman at Llantrisant, where he joined the A.S.R.S. In 1878 a twelve hours day system of working was introduced, which was really the thin end of the wedge towards the introduction of classification, this great change being brought about on October 1st, 1879. This system classified the work and the men and the wages, and in its twelve hour day operation it led the G.W. men to see the necessity of having a society of their own as enginemmen, and really proved the foundation of the Associated. Evan Evans, Tom Harding, Charles Perry, Tom Roderick, and others became pioneers of the new movement. They waited on Sir Daniel Gooch with a signed petition. "Damn the signatures," he said abruptly, "have you got the men?" This was the question they set out to answer, to get the men, and from Sheffield, Bristol, Pontypool, Newport, Birmingham, and other places the clarion call rang out.

Experience had taught the men there was no protection whatever in the A.S.R.S., and they desired to transfer from the friendly society attitude to that of a trade union. In 1881 Parfitt was transferred to London, and at Paddington set to work to form the first London branch of the Society. During the first ten years of the Society's history the Executive consisted solely of Leeds men, and it was the 1892 Conference which introduced the first representative E.C. The discussion on this subject is well worth more than passing reference. Sheffield had proposed to choose the Executive from a radius of 50 miles from the General Office, and Southport supported, but on the plea of Battersea that 50 miles was too small a radius, that limit was withdrawn. Wigan submitted a proposal that :—

"The whole of the branches shall be divided into groups or districts, and each such group or district shall elect one member of the Executive Committee, each branch in such group or district being allowed to nominate one member, and the member who receives the largest number of votes shall be the duly elected member of the Executive for such group or district."

This was supported by Plymouth, Openshaw, Sandhills, and Mr. Sunter reminded the delegates of the additional expense involved. Leeds had proposed as an amendment that the rule remain as at present, and for this 18 voted, against 46 for the Wigan proposition, which was declared carried. The districts were then fixed, and a sub-committee elected as follows :—Mr. Bliss, London ; Mr. Church, South Wales ; Mr. Ulllyott, Yorkshire ; Mr. Gough, Lancashire ; Mr. Evans, West of England. It was decided that the Executive Committee should consist of nine members, including the Trustees, who were elected by the Leeds branch. Rule 3 of the 1895 copy of the Rules set out the new basis of election, and it should be added that all the speakers paid high tribute to the efficiency of the work done by the Leeds Executive.

The North London men were keen to see what the Paddington branch looked like, and the Bow branch was opened with King's Cross as No. 3. The rapid development in London was largely influenced by a law case, concerning a fireman named David Newberry. The Inner Circle had just been completed, and some competent G.W. men were wanted as drivers. Newberry was one of those transferred, but the District Railway discovered they did not want these extra men, and booked Newberry for firing. This he refused to take, as it meant a drop from 7s. to 4s. 6d. a day, and he reported to Mr. Parfitt, Secretary of Paddington branch. The case was taken to County Court, and a claim for a month's wages in lieu of notice was successful.

Kentish Town followed King's Cross, and in February of 1887 Battersea was opened, becoming the mother branch to Nine Elms, Twickenham, and many others. Next Parfitt was transferred to Plymouth (1887), where the men gave a day's pay in support of the Midland strikers, and to Aberdare (1889). It is a very interesting sidelight on the G.W. agitations for better pay and conditions that when deputations attended before the Board the expenses of the visit were met by subscriptions of drivers and firemen out of their own pockets. Drivers contributed 2s. 6d. each and firemen 1s. 6d. I have before me a statement of such a levy, showing subscriptions

from three stations to be £5 5s., leaving a balance in hand over expenditure of 5s. 6d.

Speaking of his experience on the 1893 Executive, Mr. Parfitt recalled the Probert case, which extended the benefit of incapacitation grant to eyesight failure on account of an accident to the eye. He always regarded it as an epoch-making year in the Society's history, for reasons which have been explained in previous chapters. The eyesight question was very prominent, and it was recommended that locomotive men should be allowed the aid and protection of spectacles, especially as they were used by other grades, and even by directors, and in America enginemen were allowed to use them. The revised rules of the Benevolent Fund also came into operation in 1893, making a call of 4d. on full members and 2d. on half members, an amount not exceeding £50 to be paid to any unjustly discharged members, or £25 to half members.

The 1895 Triennial Conference saw a keen discussion on the proposal to appoint organisers, and it was only lost by a vote of 25 to 24. The rules of the Superannuation Fund were altered at the same meeting, arising out of the following proposal from the Executive :—

“ That any full benefit member—60 years—shall be entitled as follows :—

“ If a member 20 consecutive years, 5s. per week ; 25 years, 5s. 6d. per week ; 30 years, 6s. per week ; 35 years, 6s. 6d. per week ; 40 years, 7s. per week ; provided he ceases to follow his usual employment.”

This involved a slight reduction in certain cases, and it was vigorously opposed and rejected, the old provision of 5s. after ten years membership, 6s. after 15 years, and 7s. 6d. after 20 years, being supported by the majority. The Executive's proposal with regard to the Accident Incapacitation Fund, to give benefits according to years of membership, as in the case of superannuation on old age retirement, was carried. It was this Conference also which decided to present to Mr. C. H. Perry, of Newport, the

“ pathfinder ” of the Society, and to Mr W. Ullyott, of Sheffield, the first member, a gold watch and chain and an illuminated address.

In May of 1895 Taff Vale was to the fore again, and the Executive decided “ That after reading correspondence on the Taff Vale dispute we send the following telegram to Mr. G. Blake, Secretary of Cardiff branch : ‘ Executive Council consider the contemplated action of Taff Vale men leaving work without proper notice is illegal, and cannot sanction withdrawal of our members. ’ ” A dozen members of the Society were directly involved by receiving notice to leave the Taff Vale service, and the Executive demanded the withdrawal of these notices. During the next two months Taff Vale was the centre of the picture. In a letter to Cardiff the Secretary said : “ There is not so much as a resolution passed by your branch to warrant the information that there are four-fifths of our members in favour of a strike as per rule, and we feel, therefore, that no Executive Council would ever give consent to withdrawal of labour on such meagre information. We are in sympathy with the Taff Vale members, and we are not in favour of day to day or fortnightly contracts.” By the end of July certain expenses incurred during the dispute were paid, and the men were back at work under the old conditions.

During the previous year, 1894, the Society had saved out of its income £7,642, nearly one pound per member, despite legal costs of £428 incurred in a libel action brought by one Beswick, an A.S.R.S. fireman, against the Trustees of the Society. Beswick lost his case, but could not pay the costs, and he was left to become bankrupt as a result. The Society only recovered £33 of the costs incurred, but it defended its good name for sound finance, and closed the year with a total fund of £40,127. During the year 1895 its funds represented a wealth per member of £9 7s. 6d., and in 1896, after sixteen years existence, they exceeded £10 16s. per member, the Society having the proud position of being the wealthiest per member of all the trade unions in the United Kingdom. Its funds had always been very carefully and soundly invested, and

the annual interest on investments was exceeding the total income for its early years.

The Orphan Fund was just being mooted, and was strongly pressed by Bolton, alternative schemes being outlined in the "Journal." The Executive declared it was not practical, and that an increased contribution would have to be paid to meet the liability. They could not recommend anything being taken from the Trade Protection Fund, which was very substantial, as they felt its liabilities might be very heavy, and might be faced at any time. They therefore addressed the following questions to branches :—

- 1.—Are you in favour of an Orphan Fund ?
- 2.—Are you in favour of the Bolton scheme ?
- 3.—Are you in favour of an increased contribution to meet the liability of the fund ?
- 4.—Are you in favour of the Executive drafting a scheme ?

In October of 1896 the votes were returned, showing a majority of 72 for the Orphan Fund, a majority against the Bolton scheme, a majority against increased contributions, and a majority of 371 in favour of the Executive drafting a scheme. The Executive decided that nothing further should be done until the next delegate meeting, but propaganda continued, and at the 1899 Conference the Orphan Fund was decided upon, on the motion of Mr. Geo. Moore, the Bolton delegate, now Assistant General Secretary.

The Jubilee year, 1897, was a trying one for organised labour, and a busy one for the Society. A conference was called in January to consider the position of affairs on the London & North Western Railway, and in February the Society voted £50 to the relief of the locked-out Penrhyn quarrymen. In March the Executive met specially at York to consider the very serious position developing on the North Eastern, and it was resolved that in the event of a strike developing amongst other grades, enginemen and firemen must refuse to fulfil any other duties than their own. Our members at Hull and other stations were not in favour of a strike, because the Society had submitted its own distinct programme, and when

the strike did develop very few A.S.R.S. men came out, except at Gateshead. In April the companies declined to receive a deputation from the Society, and it was decided to ask the enginemen of each company to adopt the Society's programme and to present it by means of deputations. A letter to the A.S.R.S., suggesting joint action by all enginemen, led to a misunderstanding, and on April 9th a letter was sent to Mr. Harford saying: "Your Executive has misunderstood our letter. We never asked your Executive to consider the matter at all. We cannot allow anything which affects our interests as enginemen and firemen to be subject to approval by anyone other than enginemen and firemen themselves. We have never asked your committee for joint action, but we shall be glad for the co-operation of enginemen and firemen to carry out our programme."

This letter related to a joint conference which had been held at Birmingham for the approval of the National Programme previously given. At the same Executive the following resolution was carried: "We, the Executive Council, desire to place on record our appreciation of the manner in which the General Secretary has conducted us through such an important epoch in the history of our Society by his forethought and tact, and trust that the result will be improved conditions for enginemen, firemen, and cleaners on the North Eastern Railway."

Later in the year came the great engineers' dispute, during which branches sent in proposals to grant any sum to the A.S.E. up to £1,000, to levy drivers 6d. weekly and firemen 3d. Mr. A. Fox moved, as a member of the Executive, that a grant of £1,000 be made to the A.S.E., "because the A.S.E. has always responded to appeals of kindred societies for help, and have been pioneers of nearly all reforms which have been gained by the workmen of the country." It was further decided to offer a loan of £10,000 to the A.S.E. for three years, free of interest. An appeal was also issued to branches to levy themselves in support of the engineers during the lock-out. The one saving feature of the year was the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act, which came into operation on

July 1st of 1898. The Associated closed the year with 8,724 members, and reserve funds of £61,902.

The York Friendly Society of Enginemen and Firemen was taken over on September 1st, 1899, and the Leeds Society from January 1st, 1900. This twentieth year of the Society's history gave an increased membership of 940, and increased the funds by £12,764, the reserves standing at £88,862. There was prevalent dissatisfaction against conditions of service, and many men were, in fact, leaving the service because of its many injustices and the very slight prospect of younger men becoming drivers. Men were being compelled to work defective engines to the risk of their lives, and two boiler explosions on the L. & Y. killed four enginemen.

There had been hopes of Mr. F. P. Sargent, Grand Master of the American Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, visiting the 1899 Conference, but it proved impossible, and it was not until ten years later that the fraternal visit was paid. In the same year (1899) a conference took place with the Steam Enginemen's Friendly Society as to amalgamation, but the ballot of the members of that society went against it. Later in the year it was decided to write Mr. Richard Bell, the newly elected Secretary of the A.S.R.S., with a view to promoting a conference of ten enginemen and firemen, with two members of the Executive of the Associated, and a similar number of the A.S.R.S., who must be enginemen or firemen, with a view to the Federation of the two bodies of enginemen and firemen only.

A preliminary meeting of the newly-elected Executive was held on January 2nd, 1900, to draw up a programme of national conditions of service. Those present were Messrs. A. Fox, J. Holt, H. Parfitt, J. Drummond, C. Shipley, J. Gough, J. Evans, J. C. Potterill, W. Ferguson, and G. Moore. The two absent members of the complete Executive which faced the new century were Messrs. Bliss and Warwick. The proposal discussed was of federation with only the enginemen and firemen of the A.S.R.S., those present to include five from each side, with two Executive men who are engine drivers or firemen from each side. They were to report

to their Executives, no movement to be started without the consent of the Executives of both societies. In general or national movements they were to work together as one Society, each Society taking responsibility for its own members. Deputations were, as far as possible, to consist of an equal number of each Society. The Joint Conference took place on January 3rd, 1900, the membership of the A.S.R.S. being reported at 65,000, and the A.S.L.E. & F. at 9,000. A scheme of federation was drawn up and agreed to, being referred to a vote of members of both Societies. Incidentally, it might be mentioned that the A.S.R.S. delegates included two signalmen and their President, Mr. G. Thaxton, a Midland goods guard.

All branches were at once acquainted with the fact that the Societies had met on the proposed Federation Scheme, and had decided to submit one to members for their approval or otherwise. Until that was done the Executive considered it would be premature to sanction joint action, but they trusted both sides would work harmoniously together. When the returns came in it was found that only 1,750 members had voted, 986 for and 764 against. A second ballot was completed in July, with the following result: For Federation, 1,673; against 908.

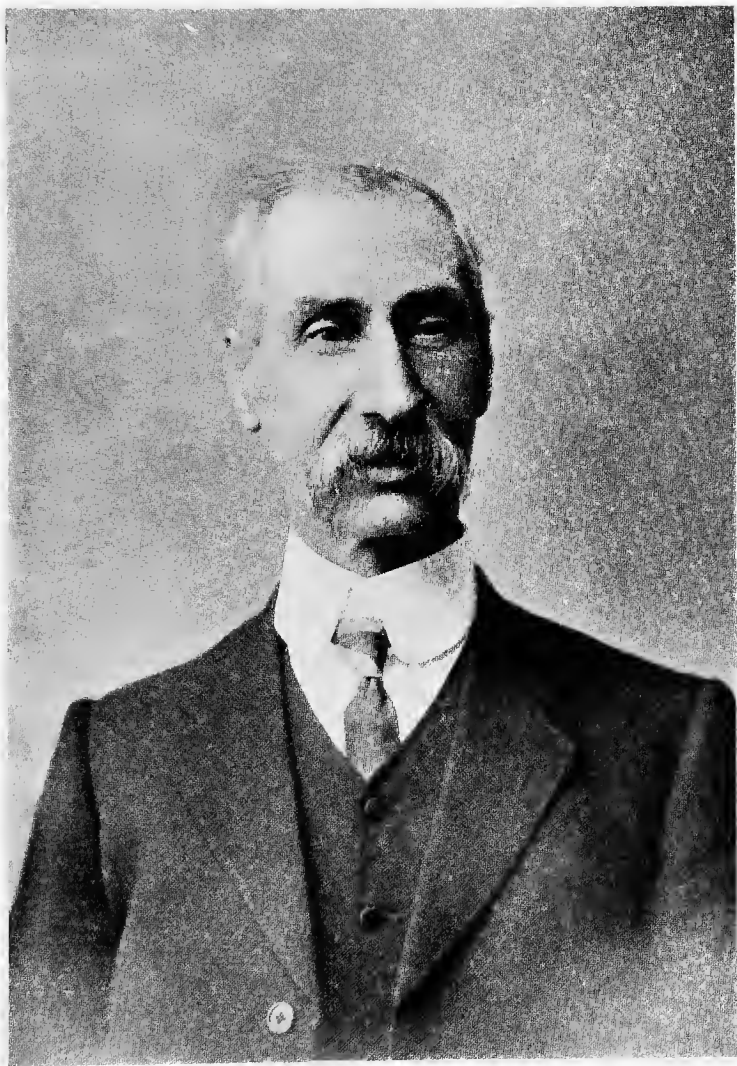
"Resolved that we sincerely regret the apathy of our members on the Federation question, not one half the members having voted, and the Executive not in a position to act," was the verdict given.

Then came the recognition of the services of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and a resolution of thanks was conveyed to them. It was resolved to present Mr. Gough, the retiring Chairman, with the sum of £5 and a gold medallion, suitably inscribed. On April 4th of 1900 Mr. A. Fox was elected Chairman of the Executive, with Mr. S. Hawkins as Vice-Chairman, and away went the new Executive with the work of a new century.

CHAPTER XI

The Twentieth Century—A Veteran's Visit—American Engines—Death of Mr. Sunter—A Notable Loss—Mr. Fox Elected General Secretary—The Important Year 1903—Mr. Parfitt Appointed Organiser—Centralisation of Funds—Labour Representation—The Federation Scheme—Its History.

WE have emerged, then, into the twentieth century, after a long and varied run through the nineteenth, and we find that after twenty years of effort the Society is consolidating its position and increasing its strength. It never had called, and did not for eleven years subsequently call, a general strike of its members, but it was all the time preparing for such an emergency, and was also week by week distributing its helpful benefits to needy members. When I was starting this chapter, Henry Shuttleworth came to see me. He was first Vice-Chairman of the Society in 1881, the second to sign the register on the opening night of the Leeds branch, and the second to occupy the position of Chairman of the Executive. When he came to see me, at my request, he was a white-haired veteran of eighty years, but still hearty. We talked over the first twenty years of adventure, and then looked at the present position. He contrasted the early days with the present, and declared the progress to be wonderful and simply amazing. He was very proud of it, and when I showed him the first minute book, containing much of his own writing in the first years, his face beamed with pleasure. He quite thought all those old records were lost for ever, and beyond all recovery.



MR. ALBERT FOX,
General Secretary 1901 to 1914.

Let us, however, return to the advent of the new century, for we have yet a long way to go. The boom of big and yet bigger locomotives continued, and the Midland and Great Northern were ordering consignments of new giants from the Baldwin works in America. Men became smaller by comparison with the vibrating monsters they drove, but they kept a sure and steady hand in control. The Lancashire & Yorkshire led the way for a time in big engines, with the gigantic ten-wheeled four-coupled express engines of the "1400" class, and next came the great "2001" class of the North Eastern Railway. The Midland and Great Northern were installing the "Mogul" freight engines, and there was talk of one running in America which in itself weighed over 103 tons. "What are we coming to?" men asked, and all the time the companies said they were unable to concede the ten hours day and still adhere to the working conditions of 1890. Footplate men were seeking other work at 5s. a week less wages because the chances of promotion became so remote. The Railway Nationalisation League, as it was then called, was active in advocating State railways, and in America the big private companies had so standardised parts that they were building locomotives in the massed style which they applied to sewing machines.

Automatic couplings, to make shunting and transit safer, were being discussed, and a Bill to make them compulsory was introduced, but withdrawn because the companies took strong objection to the expense involved. The South African War was proceeding, and a number of our members were out there driving, having engines fitted with pump and hose to draw water from streams within reach during their long veldt journeys. A corps of railway engineers left Crewe on October 9th, 1899, to undertake railway work in South Africa, many of whom were members of our Crewe branch. The great feature of the years 1900-1905 was keen interest in the mechanical side of railways, especially of engines, just as the great feature of to-day is the keen interest in the human side of railway working.

Theophilus T. Millman, of Tondur branch, was Chairman of the

1899 Triennial Conference which had decided in favour of the conference with the A.S.R.S. on Federation, and the project had only just been shelved when Taff Vale sprang into prominence again, the third time within a decade. Letters, telegrams, and resolutions poured into the Executive, which did not authorise a strike of the system, but the men came out without the consent of the Executive, and without taking a vote of the members. It was agreed to allow out-of-work pay in accordance with Rule 28 to all affected, "but we cannot, as responsible officers of the Society, sanction a violation of the rules." The payments made came to £351, and at the close of the strike the company sued the signalmen for damages, which the A.S.R.S. had to pay on their behalf. This Taff Vale judgment became an important incident in trade union history, and it was only put right in 1906 by an alteration of the law, which safeguarded the right to strike. The Society resolved that: "In the event of other railways ordering our members to do work on the Taff Vale, we are prepared to support such members as per rule if they refuse to do so. We may withdraw our members from any company which may enforce men to go on the Taff Vale." At the close of the strike the Executive complimented the General Secretary upon his prudence during the strike.

October of 1900 was significant for the telegram from the Executive to the A.S.R.S. congratulating them on the return of Richard Bell for Derby, the first working railwayman to enter Parliament. In the same month a levy was made upon branches to meet the extraordinary costs on the Sick Fund, Openshaw calling for £90 and Sheffield for £70 help from the General Fund. The total calls of branches on Head Office in that epidemic were £312. A plebiscite of members was taken on the proposed appointment of an Organising Secretary, and the votes recorded were: For 2,171, against 230. The votes of one branch (Neath) were disqualified because they were all filled up by one person. As the vote was regarded as insufficient, it was resolved to take no further steps until the next Conference.

The year 1901 brought a notable and serious loss to the Society

in the death of its first effective General Secretary, T. G. Sunter. He duly recorded the minutes at the Executive meeting on June 29th, and none thought then he was so near the end of his splendid activities. "Take him for all in all, he was a man; we shall never see his like again," could truly be said of him. He had for nearly sixteen years been a quiet and unobtrusive pilot of the Society's affairs, always generous, open-hearted, and fatherly. Only a few members had any idea of his illness when the following notice, in black borders, appeared in the "Journal" of October :—

In Memoriam.

DEATH OF T. G. SUNTER, Esq., GENERAL SECRETARY.

FELLOW-MEMBERS,

It is my most painful duty to inform you that our worthy and respected General Secretary passed away from this mortal flesh about 2 p.m., September 20th, 1901, after a somewhat lengthy illness. Whilst I am sincerely grieved to have this painful duty to perform, I feel grateful that I have been privileged to work as a subordinate official under such a conscientious, sympathetic General Secretary, and that my experience of him as an adviser and co-worker and fellow-member is such that I can safely say: "He was a man who always endeavoured to do to others as he would they should do unto him."

We have lost an officer we can ill afford to lose, one whose place will be difficult to fill, always engaged in the welfare of our Society and its members, in its highest and noblest sense. His dealings always above suspicion, his accounts always correct, a virtue in itself.

He was ever ready with kindly advice and assistance to those in need. Outside his own particular sphere of occupation, as Editor and manager of the "Journal" he had always endeavoured to allow a fair field and no favour, always allowing fair criticism, consistent with protecting his correspondents from placing themselves within the grasp of the law.

I believe he lived amongst us conscious of the welcome fact that he had made no enemies. And now, what can I say more to adorn a life many of us would do well to copy?

I extend to his family, on behalf of the Executive Council and the whole of our members, our sincere sympathy in this their irreparable loss, and trust they will be enabled to look to the Giver of all Good for solace in this great affliction. Truly indeed, God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. May we each so live as to be ready when the summons comes to us. He was laid to rest in the Cemetery, Beeston Hill, on Tuesday, September 24th, amidst every token of respect by his sorrowing relatives and friends.

I remain, yours fraternally,

A. FOX, Chairman.

Mr. Sunter was born at Halton, near Leeds, in 1847, and entered the service of the Midland Railway in 1864, as cleaner. By gradual promotion he became a driver of the best main line express passenger trains, and was driving for sixteen years. He was a splendid servant to the company and loyal colleague to his mates. It is reputed of him that he was always prompt, but never hurried away, becoming a valued adviser to his friends. He was one of the first members of the Society, and was an Executive member in its earliest days. He was General Secretary in 1885, when the membership was 1,073, and the funds £5,767. He saw and guided its growth until, in December, 1900, there were 10,000 members and £88,862 in funds. His best work was done silently, and he had no love of limelight. Once he discovered a discrepancy in his accounts of over £100, and without any hesitation called in a firm of chartered accountants to take over the books and find what was wrong. They soon located the error, and all was well, but the Executive complimented him upon his prompt action, and decided to pay the special audit fee. Sunter was kind as a father to many of the young men about him, and resolutions of genuine sorrow and condolence poured in from branches. The Leeds No. 1 branch

promoted a fund for placing a suitable memorial stone at the grave, and the idea was supported by the Executive and many branches. The granite stone erected bears the following inscription :—

In Memory of

THOMAS. G. SUNTER,

BORN APRIL 30TH, 1847.

DIED SEPTEMBER 20TH, 1901.

Erected by subscription of the Members of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, for faithful service rendered as General Secretary for 16 years.

“ The world has lost a man, but his memory lives.”

At the funeral, which took place on September 24th, the bearers were Messrs. Clarke, of Stratford branch ; Evans, of Sheffield ; J. Fearnley and G. Hall, York ; C. Hoyle and A. Pickersgill, Ardsley ; A. Lofthouse, M. J. Dickinson, C. Shaw, S. Dean, W. Goldthorpe, and G. H. Sidebottom acted as marshals to the long procession, and wreaths were sent by the Executive Council and by the following branches :—Leeds No. 1, Sheffield, Paddington, Newport, Mexboro', Hulme, Southampton, Ardsley, and Cardiff No. 2.

When the committee met in October of 1901, Mr. H. Shuttleworth, as Assistant Secretary, recorded the minutes, and it was resolved : “ We, as a Committee, are perfectly satisfied with the way in which the business of the Society has been carried out during the illness of our late General Secretary, and our best thanks are due to Messrs. Fox and Shuttleworth on these and other matters, and for the funeral arrangements for our departed friend.” At the same meeting the following telegram was received from the A.S.R.S. : “ My Congress adopted unanimously the following resolution in reference to the sad death of Mr. Sunter : ‘ That this conference of delegates regret the death of Mr. Sunter, General Secretary of the Associated Society of Engineers and Firemen, and desire to convey our condolence to Mrs. Sunter and family, and our sincere sympathy

with the Executive Committee and members in the sad loss they have sustained.—BELL.’” To this the following reply was sent : “Executive highly appreciate expression of sympathy. Will convey to Mrs. Sunter and family your vote of condolence.”

On October 4th it was resolved that applications for the position of General Secretary be invited from branches, every member to have the opportunity of being nominated for the position, but it is recommended that applicants should not be more than 45 years of age, voting to be by majority on a ballot of members. The Chairman of the Executive was made responsible for office administration in the interval. Voting papers were to be returned by December 3rd and counted on December 8th. The voting resulted as follows :—Baldwin, 29 ; Drummond, 106 ; Dickinson, 58 ; Fox, 1,860 ; Harrison, 66 ; Long, 31 ; Morse, 496 ; Parfitt, 1,536 ; Reed, 84 ; Vaughan, 103. There were five spoilt papers, making a total of 4,374. It was moved that a second ballot be ordered between Messrs. Fox and Parfitt, but another resolution was carried to take legal advice. As a result it was decided on December 9th : “That it be declared that A. Fox is elected General Secretary, and a circular sent to branches declaring same.” This circular was issued by Mr. Shuttleworth, and quite a storm was provoked thereby. Mr. Parfitt issued a personal circular to branches, dated December 24th, 1901, protesting against the decision on the following grounds :—

- 1.—General Rule 11 states that the General Secretary shall be elected by a majority of the votes of the whole of the members.
- 2.—The Executive toned down the general rule by passing a resolution that the General Secretary should be elected by a majority of the votes cast. These totalled 4,369, out of 10,000 members, and Mr. Fox’s votes numbered 1,860.
- 3.—The members and myself have a right to demand a second ballot, and I have demanded this from the Executive Council, as the candidate who secured the next highest number of votes.”

The controversy continued for some weeks, being reflected in the "Journal" and in branch minutes, but no delegate meeting was called and no variation was made in the appointment. By the authority of the Executive, Mr. Fox took hold of direction, and a new era had opened out with the year 1902. In March, Mr. John Drummond was elected as Executive Council member in succession to Mr. Fox, and Mr. J. A. Hawkins was elected Chairman, with Mr. T. T. Millman as Vice-Chairman. It was decided in that month that permission be given to the Lancashire delegates to meet once a year, on a Sunday, for the exchange of opinion on Society matters, and that their railway fares be paid by the Executive. In that decision we seem to recognise the inception of the District Council idea. In June of the same year it was decided to recommend that membership be opened to engine cleaners, and that a Triennial Conference be held in 1903 for the alteration of rules. It was decided to communicate the fact of Mr. Sunter's death to both the American Brotherhoods in letters of fraternal greetings. There was considerable discussion in 1902 on the formation of a Labour newspaper, and the Executive decided in favour of supporting one, either daily or weekly, and deemed such a project fit to be placed on the agenda of the T.U.C. Another important decision of the year was to affiliate with the Labour Representation Committee, and to contemplate a Parliamentary candidate.

The year 1903 was responsible for considerable advance. It saw the rules altered, it saw the appointment of an organiser, the addition of cleaners to the membership, the centralisation of funds, and the rendering of assistance in the formation of such a society in South Africa. The Triennial Conference took place in May, met for the first time by the new General Secretary, and it was decided by 61 votes to 2 that an organising secretary be appointed. The candidates nominated were Messrs. Parfitt, Millman, Drummond, Thirtle and Vaughan, and on the second ballot Messrs. Parfitt and Millman were left in the final contest. On the third vote Mr. Parfitt received 38 votes, against Mr. Millman's 25, Mr. Parfitt, it might be added, being President of the Conference for

the second time. The delegates widened the rules to admit cleaners and electric trainmen, on a resolution moved by Swansea. It was the same branch which moved an alteration to Rule 2, to add levies to contributions, and to add the words :—

“And by representation in the House of Commons, to be paid for by levy, not exceeding 1s. per member per annum, and from the Protection Fund.”

Several branches advocated, as an alternative, that a levy would lead to grumbling and protest, and the Protection Fund ought to be utilised. Darlington, for example, doubted the legality of making a levy for Parliamentary purposes, but it was said that if the rule passed the Registrar it became law. The subject was keenly discussed on three days of the Conference. There was considerable applause when eventually it was decided, by 35 votes to 24, to establish the political levy. The salary of the General Secretary having been raised from £4 to £5 weekly, Conference turned attention to the Centralisation of Funds, proposed by Mr. Drummond on behalf of the Executive. It aimed, he said, at simplicity, economy and efficiency ; it would save branch secretaries much elaborate book-keeping, and always keep the Head Office informed of the state of branches. At that time there was £4,908 lying in branch funds, which, if centralised and invested at 4 per cent. would bring in £160 a year. The Taff Vale action, too, had shown how necessary it was to control the funds. Cases of defaulting secretaries and confusion of branch books would be scarce in future. The resolution was accepted, and a sub-committee appointed to draft a scheme.

This sub-committee brought forward on the following day a scheme of ten clauses, which is virtually the scheme now in operation. Its provisions, in summary, were :—

- 1.—All moneys or securities to be forwarded to the General Office forthwith.
- 2.—Branch secretaries to collect and remit contributions and fees.



Present-day Emblem.

- 3.—The contributions to be apportioned to the respective funds by the General Secretary.
- 4.—Members claiming sick pay must furnish General Secretary with medical certificate of illness and of recovery.
- 5.—Sick pay to be forwarded direct to the member concerned.
- 6.—Members must make application to the branch for any other benefits, for branch decision and payment.
- 7.—All such benefits to be paid by General Office to branch secretaries.

Under the system in operation before the adoption of the above, branch secretaries had to enter details on a very large sheet, apportioning the contributions to the different funds. Their task was laborious, and only part of the funds came to Head Office. It was possible for a defiant secretary to sign an illegal payment of strike pay, and although that never happened, the danger to the whole Society was sufficiently proved by Taff Vale.

For several reasons it might be said that 1903 saw the birth of the Society in its modern form, with a real Head Office, with an organiser, with a Parliamentary fund, with a widened membership, and with delegates present, like J. Bromley, Geo. Wride, and several others, who were destined to have very close contact with its larger growth and development in the next twenty years on the lines now adopted.

The Conference was preceded by a further discussion between the A.S.R.S. and the A.S.L.E. & F., on the Scheme of Federation, shelved since the year 1900, and this is an appropriate position to introduce the scheme in full :—

SCHEME OF FEDERATION

BETWEEN

THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND
FIREMEN AND THE

AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF RAILWAY SERVANTS,

ADOPTED AT A

CONFERENCE HELD IN THE TRADES AND LABOUR HALL, LEEDS,
MAY 18TH, 1903.

CLAUSE A.

Any movement affecting all grades or locomotive men only must receive the sanction of the Executive Committees of both Societies, and be conducted under the joint control of the two General Secretaries, each Society bearing the personal expenses of its own delegates, but all other expenses to be borne "proportionately."

CLAUSE B.

All programmes for improved conditions for locomotivemen shall be drawn up at joint meetings of that grade, and submitted for the approval of the Executive Committee of each Society. If approved, the movement shall have the full support of each Society, as laid down in Clause A.

CLAUSE C.

Programmes for improved conditions for grades other than locomotivemen shall be subject to the approval of the Executive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants only, but copies shall afterwards be forwarded to the Executive of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, and that Society shall be informed of the progress made before its support shall be solicited.

CLAUSE D.

For the purpose of giving effect to Clause E, a Joint Committee shall be formed consisting of five members of the A.S.R.S. and five members of the A.S.L.E. & F., who shall be elected by the respective bodies each year, and the General Secretaries of the two Societies. The Joint Committee shall elect a Chairman at the first meeting, the Chairman to be allowed to vote as an ordinary member of the Committee. The two General Secretaries shall act as Joint Secretaries, and shall not be allowed to vote.

CLAUSE E.

Should a movement which has been sanctioned in accordance with Clauses A, B and C be unsuccessful in obtaining the

conditions asked for, and if it is found necessary to further press the demands by a withdrawal of labour, then the Joint Committee shall be summoned together, and the whole of the facts and circumstances placed before them ; and if 75 per cent. of the Joint Committee, by their votes, recommend the withdrawal of labour, the two Executive Committees must meet jointly to finally decide, and if a strike is resolved upon, it shall then be the paramount duty of each Society to do all in its power to bring the dispute to a successful issue.

CLAUSE F.

In the event of a strike sanctioned in accordance with Clause E, affecting locomotivemen only, each Society shall pay strike allowance to its own members ; all other expenses to be borne jointly. A strike in support of one or all grades other than locomotivemen will mean that each Society shall pay strike allowance to its own members, but all other expenses shall be borne by the A.S.R.S.

CLAUSE G.

All demands and programmes submitted to the companies affecting locomotivemen only, or in cases where locomotivemen are concerned in a movement with other grades, shall be signed by the General Secretaries of the two Societies. Demands or programmes in which locomotivemen are not included, shall be signed by the General Secretary of the A.S.R.S. only. In all cases where an offer of arbitration is being made, or notices of a strike given to a company or companies, such documents shall be signed by both General Secretaries, whether locomotivemen are concerned or not. In all local grievances the members of both Societies should act together, and in appointing deputations, committees, etc., to wait upon superintendents or directors to watch over the interests of locomotivemen generally, such committees shall, as far as possible, consist of an equal number of men who are members of their respective Societies.

CLAUSE H.

Movements sanctioned or commenced by either Society before the formation of the Federation shall not be subject to the above rules, excepting Clauses E and F.

CLAUSE I.

No agreement entered into at this Conference shall be binding until it has been submitted to the Societies and voted on. If the voting is successful, then the agreement shall be signed by the General Secretaries of both Societies.

CLAUSE J.

A combined meeting of the Executives must be held once in every twelve months, to discuss and decide on the policy to be pursued on points both labour and political, and members of both Societies shall be at liberty, on production of Branch Cards, to enter either Branch-room in any town, and to take part in any discussion appertaining to labour or politics.

RICHARD BELL, M.P.,

ALBERT FOX,

Joint Secretaries.

Mr. W. G. Loraine had presided at the Conference referred to, held at the invitation of the A.S.R.S. Neither side had any fixed proposals, and the A.S.R.S. sought amalgamation, which the Associated could not discuss. The 1900 Scheme of Federation was the basis of discussion, and adopted with slight alterations. It would be advantageous to trace a little further the history of this movement now. On May 10th of 1904 a joint meeting of the two E.C.'s was held to consider a national programme, and it was thought advisable to refer it to a joint meeting of loco. men, for them to elect delegates to a conference summoned to draft such a programme. On October 9th of the same year a joint meeting of the two E.C.'s was held under Clause J of the Federation Scheme. There was discussion and resolutions on organising loco. men, a national programme, and on the Enginemen's Certificate Bill, which Mr.

Fox was taking a close interest in. On April 11th and 12th of 1905 the suggested joint conference of delegates from both societies took place, and drew up a national programme. On November 23rd of 1906 came another joint meeting of the E.C.'s, the two items put down for discussion by the A.S.R.S. being the discussion in the A.S.L.E. & F. Conference, and the pamphlet issued by the General Secretary, "Items of Interest," consisting of a series of quotations of a militant and critical type, which Mr. Bell characterised as "libellous, untruthful and malicious." The A.S.L.E. & F. members left the room, and proceedings terminated. Mr. Fox later declined to sign the printed report owing to alterations having been made in previous reports after he had signed. The conditions of the Scheme of Federation had, it was complained, been ignored by the A.S.R.S. in several matters.

In January of 1907 the A.S.R.S. declined an invitation to co-operate with a conference of A.S.L.E. & F. members to draw up a national programme, but agreed it was time something was done. It is almost pathetic to notice that in the N.E.R. arbitration proceedings before Lord James of Hereford, Mr. Bell submitted, by way of an alternative to the guaranteed week, that the men should be allowed to live further away, and to carry on any other business they desired. In October of the same year a conference of the five railway societies was held to discuss federation of the whole, as a result of a resolution passed at the A.G.M. of the Pointsmen's and Signalmen's Society, and arranged by that Society. Mr. Bell then said by letter that he could not see how a Federation scheme could work between any two societies catering for the same employees, and agreed to send Mr. Williams with a watching brief. All the Societies at that conference were agreed upon enforcing their demand for recognition by the railway companies. A resolution was carried embodying the principle of Federation of all railway trade unions, and a committee of two members from each Society was elected to draw up a scheme. There, for the present, I am obliged to leave the history of a movement which is neither complete nor satisfactory.

CHAPTER XII

Still Growing—The Loughor Inquiry—Coroners and Organisers—Friction with the A.S.R.S.—The 1907 Programme—Recognition Refused—Driver Webster Acquitted—The South Leeds Contests—Three Organisers—Salisbury and Grantham Disaster—A Rough Night at Barry—Driver Gourlay's Sentence.

THE question of Federation drew us on to the eve of the sharp incidents of 1908, but it did not involve a complete history of more important events which had occurred between 1903 and 1908, including the Conciliation Boards year, 1907. To gather the threads of this wider movement we are compelled to revert to the end of 1903 as a starting point, when we find the Society delighted at having enrolled 1,145 members during the year, opened nine new branches, and having funds of £115,734. Considerable sums had been spent in defending members in legal actions respecting compensation claims, and unfair charges by Coroners, and in efforts to secure better service conditions from the companies. The bigger engines and greater loads, and the compulsory retirement, were together causing stagnation, and evidently men were feeling it. The year 1904—the year of the Loughor disaster on the Great Western, in which Brothers Lloyd and Harris were killed—was a record year for new members, the total membership being 12,000, with funds £123,000, over £10 per head. Good causes were evidently at work, backed by an organiser, for the year 1905 saw a further increase of 2,800 members, accompanied by a deletion of

some defaulting members, and funds of £132,665. Special grants of £50 each had been made to two members at Plaistow and Barry "for what appeared tyranny on account of the part they took in the cause of their fellows."

The Loughor disaster deeply stirred the minds of drivers, firemen, and the public, for it turned upon the use of a tank engine as leader on a double-headed express train. It was gathered that since 1876 there had been 25 reports of accidents by tank engines running off the line owing to oscillation when pushed at too high a speed. All too often "Killed by an Act of God" was the verdict on railway accidents, when everything possible was alleged to have been done by companies to avoid such an accident. The Loughor disaster happened on October 3rd, and five persons were killed. At the inquest was the usual array of experts, accompanied this time by Mr. Clement Stretton, who had visited all the wrecks of the last twenty years. It was he who advanced the theory of wreck due to oscillation, and it came out in evidence that in 38 weeks there had been 91 complaints at the shed about engines, chiefly about this one, No. 1674. This was on the second day of the inquest, and the jury, having retired for an hour, returned their verdict at 11 p.m. They found that the accident was due to oscillation of engine No. 1674, and recommended the discontinuance of saddle tank engines on fast trains, thereby fully accepting Mr. Stretton's theory.

Inquests and Board of Trade Inquiries have always formed an important part of the duties of an organiser. They are not only able to assist the member concerned, but often, by their practical knowledge, to assist the court, too. There are still a few coroners who dislike the presence of organisers, and desire that a solicitor, lacking any personal knowledge of railway life, should represent the men concerned. A coroner is as much the king of his own court as a captain is of his ship, and as yet the trade unions have only a courtesy right to place an organiser there. When Mr. Herbert Gladstone was at the Home Office he issued a circular to coroners generally, expressing his approval of the practice of allowing trade union representatives at certain inquests, a practice which he trusted

would be generally adopted. In this circular, issued June 1st, 1907, Mr. Gladstone said :—

“ In the case of accident in other industrial occupations, e.g., in metalliferous mines, on railways, or in the construction of engineering works, no provision has been made by Statute for the appearance of representatives of the deceased workmen or of the Union or Society to which they belong, but the Secretary of State understands that it is the general practice of coroners at inquests on industrial accidents to allow such representatives to attend and examine witnesses, and he cannot but think that where special knowledge of, e.g., railway working, is necessary for the purpose of elucidating the circumstances in which the accident occurred, the examination of the witnesses by the representatives of the railwaymen may often be of value. He trusts, therefore, that the practice may be generally adopted.”

Not all coroners acted upon this, and one of them told Mr. Parfitt that it would have no influence upon him, and none but a solicitor should act in his court. As a general rule, however, they welcome the organiser, and all seem to do their utmost to probe the case to the fullest extent.

In those early days of organising, work was very hard and continuous, with the United Kingdom for a district, and six to ten weeks continuous absence from home, until the Executive resolved that every sixth week be allowed at home.

In the case of Board of Trade Inquiries, and the preliminary examination of the scene of accident, companies were far too ready to regard the organisers as undesirable intruders, and often flatly refused to allow them any facilities, or even to attend the inquiry. A case of that kind occurred at Crewe with Mr. Parfitt, but the Inspector carefully explained the whole scene for Mr. Parfitt's special benefit before the inquiry opened. It seems an outrage that while inspections took place the representatives of the men most intimately concerned should be refused facilities even to view the scene. There was a case at Highbridge on the G.W.R.,

when a company superintendent strongly objected to the presence of Mr. J. H. Thomas and Mr. Parfitt, for the men involved. The Inquiry was being held on company premises, so Col. Yorke intimated that if the objection were maintained he would adjourn it to other premises where they could attend. This led to an immediate and shame-faced withdrawal of a mean objection, rarely experienced on the G.W.R.

The obstacles raised by the North Western received a smart check by a blocking motion on one of their Bills in the House of Commons, and on the Taff Vale line the era of secrecy ended with the terrible accident near Pontypridd, in which some twelve people lost their lives. Trade Unionism has advanced in this respect. In 1905 John Drummond was appointed organiser for Scotland, residing in Glasgow. The silver medal, duly inscribed, was instituted as a present for those securing 25 members, the Executive Committee in charge at that period (1903 to 1906) being Messrs. Atkinson, Cheshire; Cooper, South London; Millman, Midlands; Mabberley, Bristol; Moore, Lancashire; Chapman, Yorkshire; Hawkins, West of England; Warwick, South Wales; Clarke, North London; and Shipley, Scottish.

The text of the Locomotive Enginemens' Certificate Bill was presented to the Trade Union Congress in 1905, and Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., was in the following year asked to pilot the measure through the House. Mr. Fox waited on Mr. Lloyd George at the Board of Trade to ask his support, Mr. Parfitt was nominated as a Parliamentary candidate if a suitable vacancy offered itself, and Mr. Fox was in touch with South Leeds. Unfortunately, the Secretary's chances of election in the two contests he fought there were seriously diminished by his attitude towards the A.S.R.S. Before the first effort to secure the seat, he had decided upon a certain militant policy towards the all grades union, and the result of the mutual warfare is traced in many unhappy episodes between 1905 and 1911. The joint national strike in that year did something to close the breach for a time, but in the six years alluded to there were continuous controversies and storms. The Aylesbury disaster in January

of 1905, in which the driver, Barnshaw, did not know the road, was seized upon by the "Railway Review" as an occasion for a very sharp attack on Mr. Fox in relation to circumstances attending the Inquiry. Competition had reached a battling point, and there were no bouquets between Mr. Bell and Mr. Fox. I want to touch lightly rather than labour some of the episodes, for time heals much, and no good service can be done by embitterment over the past. I notice that J. H. Thomas, of 32, Broad Street, Swindon, comes on the scene as a delegate to a conference under Clause D of the Federation Scheme in January of 1905.

In April of that year the Executive sat for several days, an unusual feature then, to consider a National Programme for Enginemen, and on two days there sat a national conference of delegates at the People's Hall, Leeds, to ratify that programme. It was not an ordinary delegate meeting of the Society, but a gathering representing all enginemen, the first of its kind, and, said the Executive Report, "the importance of such a meeting cannot be over-estimated." In many respects the year 1905 made an indelible impression upon the Society, and looking back upon it now, the chief event was probably the Conference mentioned, and the adoption of the uniform National Programme. It was not made effective in the sense of being presented by the Executive to all companies, but its true importance lay in the fact of the adoption of the principle of a national programme for all enginemen. That is why the Conference in the People's Hall, Leeds, must always find its place in history. It laid the foundation for advance in 1907 and later years.

The London District Railway was being electrified, and questions regarding motormen caused another acute passage between Messrs. Bell and Fox. Together, for the first time, they met a Board of Directors, but, it is recorded, "Mr. Bell did not in any way support Mr. Fox, either in the Board-room or elsewhere, in his endeavour to retain two men in the motor cab. For this Mr. Bell must take the responsibility." Mr. Keir Hardie raised the matter in the House of Commons, and a protest was sent to the Board of Trade

against one man being in the motor cab. It was carried also before the Trade Union Congress.

While this storm continued there was an interlude, owing to the committal for trial on a charge of manslaughter of Driver Webster, of Stratford, following a fatal collision. Webster had seen 50 years service without accident, and the Society acted promptly and well for his defence. He was tried by Mr. Justice Grantham and a jury at the Old Bailey, and after lengthy evidence was acquitted, Mr. Justice Grantham adding that he hoped Webster would be driving for many years to come without accident. But Webster had not escaped injury, and soon he was incapacitated. The litigation dragged into 1906, when Webster was paid a final settlement of £128, in addition to sums previously paid.

The trial was scarcely over when Mr. Bell issued a printed report of a joint executive meeting, alleged to have been altered in several places after the Associated signatures had been appended, and certain remarks of Mr. Bell's were put into heavier type. While vigorous protest was being made, Mr. Fox was in the field in South Leeds, with a strong A.S.R.S. section impairing his chances, and Mr. Millman was authorised to contest Mid-Glamorgan if opportunity came. The opportunity did not come, but South Leeds was contested, Mr. Fox losing with a vote of 4,030. The result came almost at the same time as the result of the election of the second organiser, previously referred to. The four highest votes in the eight candidates were: Drummond, 2,138; Bromley, 1,158; Vaughan, 906; Atkinson, 617.

In 1906, sad to relate, there were complaints of bad language used in club-rooms and branch-rooms about politics! The divided ones sought the advice of the Executive, who replied that they knew no politics but Labour. In that year the Labour Representation Committee became the Labour Party, and the Society had begun to regularly send its delegates. Messrs. Fox and Drummond were submitted as candidates. A feature of the period was the issue of loans to members, many of whom took the advantage of borrowing £250 or so, to buy their own dwelling-

houses. The West Brompton branch found it had no further service for the model engine, as the line was electrified, and sold it to the Executive for £18. Many compensation cases were demanding attention, sums up to £450 being secured in addition to £150 previously paid by instalments. Mr. Fox was nominated for the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, and his subsequent visit to America was mooted. He and Mr. Parfitt were appointed to visit the Dublin and Belfast Engine Drivers' Trade Union, to discuss amalgamation, and in October, just after the Trade Union Congress, there was a return to animosity between the two Societies. Mr. Bell had acted independently over the District Railway question, and when reproached for it under the Federation scheme, he replied that if he needed assistance, and could not conduct the case alone, he would inform his Executive to that effect.

The Salisbury disaster of July 1st, 1906, gave pause to the controversy between secretaries for a time. Driver W. J. Robins and his mate, A. Gadd, both of whom were killed, were members of ours, and the Society had their interests watched by counsel at the inquest, which took place on July 16th. The jury found the accident was due to excessive speed round the compound curve after passing Salisbury Station, for which they blamed Driver Robins, but they found the company was to blame for that fact as well as the driver. Robins had never driven through Salisbury station before, and was never warned before starting of the danger of the curve and the speed limit of thirty miles an hour over it. Salisbury was not a case of derailment by the wheel-flange mounting the rails, but of complete over-turning by a heavy engine losing its true centre of gravity on the curve. It raised the whole question of height and weight of boilers, and their limit by the gauge of 4 feet 8½ inches. Robins drove at a speed exceeding 60 miles an hour, over a curve which has a super-elevation of 3½ inches at the centre. It was just beyond that point that the engine rolled on its side and brought about a tremendous wreck. The funeral of the two members, Robins and Gadd, at Tooting, was a very impressive

ceremony. The two flower-covered coffins lay side by side in the Church, and at the close of the service, which was very largely attended, the South Western Railway Band played the "Dead March."

Then came Grantham, on September 19th, when the express, King's Cross to Scotland, did not pull up in the station, but passed through at high speed. But no harm need have come of that if the main line had been kept open. Instead of that, the express was turned on to the Nottingham branch line, which has a sharp curve and return curve, over which no train can pass safely at a speed greater than fifteen to twenty miles an hour. It was this which made disaster inevitable at Grantham. The fireman on the wrecked train was "a gentleman apprentice," which generally means that the driver is responsible for everything. Already a speed of seventy miles an hour had been reduced to forty miles by the first application of the vacuum brake, and the opening of the large ejector would have stopped the train soon, but the branch loop killed all hopes, and a dozen lives were lost in the destruction. Thus, although Grantham confirmed Salisbury as to speed on curves, the direct cause at Grantham certainly was the setting of the points for the branch. Driver Fleetwood knew the road well, and on the previous night had duly stopped the same train at Grantham.

The year 1906 was important to railwaymen for other and more permanent reasons. The "all-grades" movement put a sting into much of Mr. Bell's contact with the A.S.L.E. & F., but if the hostility and very paltry actions of the period were designed to rout the Associated, or even to check its prosperity, the designs were tremendously astray, for the membership funds continued to grow apace. Railwaymen were organising and breathing new life. They talked firmly about the eight hours day, and the ten hours maximum for all railwaymen. Their programmes all demanded better wages, less overtime, and less Sunday work. They wanted recognition by the companies, which would not meet either Society to discuss their programmes. They regarded their employees

as " free and independent men, and denied the right of trade unions to speak for them, as they were not feeling any unrest, and were not underpaid," and so on.

This preliminary round of 1906 led to the crisis of 1907, and ultimately the strike of 1911. Late in 1906 an Executive had been elected to serve for the next three years, the members being R. Atkinson (G.C.), Cheshire ; J. M. Bliss (L.B. & S.C.), South London ; W. Clarken (M.R.), Midlands ; Geo. Moore (L. & Y.), Lancashire ; C. Shipley (N.E.), Northern District ; W. Chapman (G.N.), North Midland ; D. Brodie (N.B.), Scottish ; Geo. Wride (G.W.), Bristol ; R. Bowden (G.W.), West of England ; W. Warwick (L. & N.W.), South Wales ; W. Clarke (G.E.), North London. It was this newly-elected committee which sent out the circular of January 18th, 1907, giving details of the National Programme to be submitted to all companies, after its adoption by the Conference on January 8th. In brief this programme provided for the eight hour day, the guaranteed week, exclusive of Sunday duty ; Christmas Day and Good Friday to be paid as Sunday, at time and a half rates ; mileage clauses with a limit of 250 miles as a day's work ; drivers' wages, 6s. daily, advancing to 8s. daily after six years ; firemen's wages to be 4s. daily, to 5s. 6d. after six years experience ; 5s. weekly extra for men living in London ; cleaners to have 15s. to £1 weekly, by advances of 1s. per week, per annum ; promotion to be by seniority ; lodging allowance 2s. 6d., and where there are dormitories, 1s. 6d. daily ; being 3s. and 2s. respectively in London.

The discord existing between the two Societies was exemplified at Barry, where, on March 24th, Mr. Fox was refused a hearing, and was unable to address a meeting because some of the other grades had organised a " rough house " for the occasion, bursting open the doors, and indulging in general disorder. Evidently they repented on reflection, as Mr. Fox was able to address a well-ordered meeting in Barry a few weeks later. " I understand," wrote Mr. Fox, " that there were amongst them professing Christians and members of chapels in Barry." Incidents like this indicate that the

two forces were far from ready to stand shoulder to shoulder in common cause like they did in 1911 and 1919. They magnified mole-hills into mountains of difference, and said sharp things against each other, while the directors looked quietly on, lying low, like Brer Rabbit, and sayin' nuffin'. This made favourable ground for Mr. Lloyd George to come forward as the "friend" of the railwaymen, as he did later.

Correspondence between the two Societies came to narrow limits, letters from the A.S.R.S. being only formally acknowledged. During that summer, Theophilus Millman got into hot water for taking lunch with the officials concerned at an Inquiry. I see no harm in that, especially as poor Millman had had no food for 13 hours. Some branches felt it was compromising with the devil, and strongly protested. In that year, too, Ivor Gregory was discharged at Taunton, and while his claim for victimisation was disallowed, he was engaged as a clerk in the Head Office.

A third organiser was appointed, the voting being :—W. Warwick, 2,490 ; J. Bromley, 2,469 ; R. Atkinson, 1,903. Thus Messrs. Parfitt, Drummond and Warwick were in the field in 1907, and were instructed to reside at London, Glasgow, and Chester respectively "forthwith." That led to a little friction, as the Society had already recognised the principle of extra pay for London. Fifteen new branches were opened in one month that year, and even on the S.E. & Chatham the Society enrolled 600 members. It was certainly a moving time, with 219 branches at work, and amid the activities came the case of Driver Gourlay, the Scottish driver who was sentenced to imprisonment for manslaughter. Gourlay was not a member of the Society, but his harsh treatment for an error, after long years of faithful service, caused a national outburst of indignation. Practically every member signed a petition for his release from prison, which was presented to the Secretary for Scotland, with 21,000 signatures appended. But the law moves very slowly for a workman, unless he has stolen a loaf of bread, and Gourlay had completed his bitter sentence before the Secretary for Scotland had completed his consideration of the appeal.

The contest for organisers led to vacancies on the Executive, of which Mr. Geo. Moore was made President. Mr. F. Robotham, of Swansea, came on for South Wales; Mr. W. Chapman, of Doncaster, for the North Midland; and Mr. Clarken, of Nottingham, for the Midlands. The quarrel between the Societies found reflection in the Press as well as in branch-rooms. There was a projected libel action against a Bolton paper, and many resolutions from branches. Most of them "supported Mr. Fox," but Stratford and a few others protested against Mr. Fox's reported speeches, and called for a better spirit. The Executive passed a special resolution on the matter, recording that it had not received any invitation from the A.S.R.S. to sanction an all-grades movement according to the Federation Scheme Clause A. They held that in making his statements Mr. Fox was acting with a sole desire to promote the best interests of the Society, and they expressed implicit confidence in him.

The storm, however remote it may seem now, was real enough at the time, and it had serious effect in South Leeds. The attention of the Labour Party Executive was drawn to damaging remarks in the "Railway Review," and the assistance of the Trade Union Congress Parliamentary Committee was invoked to check the campaign. Delegate meetings of the A.S.R.S. had been held on October 5th and 19th, and then on October 20th, at the Euston Theatre, London, Mr. Fox delivered a speech which caused them further annoyance, and their committee declared: "We cannot proceed further with this scheme owing to this breach of confidence by the General Secretary of the A.S.L.E. & F." The unexpected happened, for early in 1908, Sir J. Lawson Walton died, and Mr. Fox found himself launched into a bye-election for South Leeds, under the hot resentment of A.S.R.S. members for his alleged indiscretions. However fully justified he may have been, the result of this difference was a foregone conclusion. The election was fought and lost, and, said Mr. Fox: "It is to be regretted that the slander, falsehoods, and trickery of the supporters of the supposed railway crisis should have allowed a difference between two Societies



MR. GEORGE MOORE,
Assistant General Secretary since 1910.

to step in and block the social and political machinery which controls the welfare of the whole." The failure he attributed to three causes : (1) The inability of the Chairman of Leeds L.R.C. to keep out matter that did not properly belong to the L.R.C. ; (2) The local L.R.C. took no steps to investigate our case until after the death of Sir J. Lawson Walton ; (3) The resolution of the Labour Party at Hull had its effect.

Just before this election, and at the close of the " supposed " railway crisis, other incidents of a personal nature had been discussed, but I feel that no good purpose is served by relating them.

CHAPTER XIII

The Crisis of 1907—The Recognition Question—Mr. Bell's Attitude—The Shrewsbury Disaster—Conciliation Boards—Mr. Fox Visits America—American Delegates to England—Brakes and Heavy Loads—A Libel Action—The Fourth Organiser—Mr. Moore Elected Assistant Secretary—The Osborne Judgment.

THE crisis of 1907 passed without a strike, but it takes an important place in railway history, because it resulted in the establishment of the familiar machinery of the Conciliation Boards, and followed later by the Sectional Boards. When these latter started in 1908, it was decided to instruct delegates to refuse the offers of the companies to pay their expenses. The settlement secured in 1907 provided for an indirect sort of recognition, by the process of the Boards, and it was signed on November 6th by Messrs. A. Fox and J. M. Bliss, along with the solicitor, Mr. Tippetts, of London, for the A.S.L.E. & F. The records of the period are not ample, for great discussion and controversy seem to have eclipsed the chance of recording the events as they moved. Mr. Fox held in his speeches that recognition of itself was not worth fighting about, for it was only a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The Society was developing its national programme, and felt that if it were attached to the claim for recognition the cause would have been worth a fight.

Mr. Bell was out for recognition, and assured his members that nothing short of official recognition would be accepted. He was opposed to Socialism, opposed to the nationalisation of railways,

and declined to identify himself with the Labour Party. He did not get official recognition, he did not ask for the co-operation of the A.S.L.E. & F., and did his best to make his members believe that it hardly counted. It is very significant that while Mr. Bell was busy with this propaganda, fifteen new branches were opened in one month. Looking back now, it seems unfortunate that many members of the A.S.R.S. were deliberately taught to regard A.S.L.E. & F. members as "blacklegs," and yet such slander must have been generally disbelieved, for the Society grew apace on such statements. Forty-one new branches were opened in that year, and the membership increased by 3,503. The Federation scheme was never properly observed, and, said Mr. Fox, "It is not even understood by those who intend to have amalgamation." Mr. Geo. Moore, who had been elected President of the Society in January, accompanied Mr. Fox on the platform at Gloucester and several other centres in England and Scotland. The organisers, too, were busy, and the Society's firm attitude had many able advocates.

In the middle of the crisis, on October 15th, in the same week as the Euston Theatre mass meeting, came the Shrewsbury disaster, in which a London & North Western train from Crewe approached Shrewsbury station at a high rate of speed instead of stopping, passed the signals at danger, and entered a sharp curve. The unavoidable happened, practically the whole train leaving the road, and all the leading coaches being smashed. Eighteen persons, including driver and fireman, were killed, and a large number injured. It was much like Grantham over again, except that the train was not turned into a fatal branch line, as at Grantham.

The Shrewsbury accident formed the subject of a very important debate between Mr. Bromley and Mr. Thomas at Tredegar Hall, Newport, on Sunday, June 14th, 1908. Enginemen were intensely concerned about vacuum brake failures, and while they associated Shrewsbury with such a failure, the Board of Trade Inspector, Col. Yorke, suggested in his report the terrible possibility of Driver Martin, the driver of the ill-fated train, being asleep at his post.

Unfortunately, the possibility of this was accepted by Mr. Bell and his assistant secretary, Mr. Williams, and there was criticism of the attitude taken by Mr. Thomas at the Inquiry. "The Railway Review" said: "Moreover, in ordinary life we are quite familiar with dozing and daydreaming as recognised failings of a few minutes." The debate in question turned upon the defence of Driver Martin, and it reviews the whole details of the tragedy.

The Conciliation Board scheme was only the substitution of a new method of approach on questions of honest wages, providing for conciliation and arbitration on matters raised by either side, in the following manner :—

- (A) Boards to be formed for each railway company which adheres to the scheme.
- (B) The various grades of employees covered by the scheme to be grouped for this purpose in a suitable number of sections, and the area served by the company to be divided if necessary for purposes of election into a suitable number of districts.
- (C) The employees belonging to each section to choose from themselves one or more representatives from each district, to form the employees' side to meet representatives of the company.
- (D) Where a sectional board fails to arrive at a settlement, the question to be referred, on the motion of either side, to the Central Conciliation Board.
- (E) In the event of the Conciliation Boards being unable to arrive at an agreement, or the Board of Directors or the men failing to carry out the recommendations, the subject of difference to be referred to arbitration of a single arbitrator.
- (F) The present scheme to be in force until twelve months after notice has been given by one side to the other to terminate it. No such notice to be given within six months of the present date.

Such, briefly stated, was the first Conciliation Scheme, and it should also be stated of the year 1907 that the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1906 came into operation on July 1st.

The Executive, at a meeting on November 8th, discussed matters connected with the railway crisis, and endorsed the action of its representatives in signing the agreement, "and desire to place on record our appreciation of the efforts of Mr. Lloyd George in bringing about a settlement amongst the railway workers. We recommend the members to give the settlement a fair trial." Members were also urged to avail themselves of every possible opportunity to take full advantage of the Conciliation scheme, with a view to getting improved conditions for locomotive men generally. This they did, and quite a series of company and locomotive grade movements began. So much so that the 1908 Report says: "All branches have been busy with the National Programme and the so-called Conciliation Boards. Your General Secretary accepted on your behalf the scheme, but we are glad it is not of our manufacture, for a better name for it would be the Confiscation Board. We are pleased, however, that the G.W. and G.C. men have obtained considerable improvements. Other companies have also been somewhat successful, but we believe that the locomotive men's salvation lies in minding their own business, and dealing with employers direct, and that a wide berth for the Conciliation Scheme is the best advice we can give." These Boards, and the National Programme movement, proved very expensive, so that the sums spent by the Society in 1908 totalled £21,957. Amalgamation was completed with the Scottish Drivers' and Firemen's Friendly Society, which brought over funds of £3,628.

At the Convention of the American Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, held at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in September of 1906, Mr. Fox had been elected an honorary member of that organisation, after friendly correspondence, and an invitation was conveyed to him to attend the next Biennial Conference in Columbus, Ohio, on September 14th of 1908. Mr. Fox was authorised to accept this invitation, and he went on that historic liner the

"Lusitania," receiving a splendid reception by the American enginemen. The result of this was a return visit of a similar character in the following year, for the Triennial Conference of May, 1909, vociferously welcomed Bro. W. S. Carter, President of the American Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen, and Brother Patrick Fennell, of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen. The latter, as "Shandy Maguire," had won considerable repute as a railwayman poet, and had several times contributed to the "Journal." He recited several of his poems during this almost royal tour of England. A special Convention medal was struck, the bars bearing the names of the visitors and of Albert Fox, each delegate wearing one.

There was a reception for the visitors on May 15th at Liverpool, followed on May 16th by a mass meeting in the Picton Hall. They were received by the Lord Mayor, and entertained to tea by Messrs. Lever Bros. at Port Sunlight. On the 18th they came to Leeds, and on the 19th were received by the Conference. They visited various works, attended smoking concerts, and toured such resorts as Harewood Hall, Ilkley, Bolton Abbey, and York. They were presented with very handsome and specially designed albums, containing 210 photographs of scenes in Great Britain, and of the officers of the Society. When they left for London on May 22nd, Mr. Carter travelled on the G.N. engine No. 301, which made the journey of 185½ miles in 3 hours and 30 minutes. They attended mass meetings in London, visited Woolwich, saw the King win the Derby race, travelled to Sheffield, Crewe, Stoke, and Cardiff, and finally left London for Southampton by special train. A special brochure was published, illustrating Leeds, and a special Convention Number of the "Journal" was issued. Every effort was made to give the visitors close attention and a happy time. Fennell, who was an honorary member of the Society, frequently contributed to the "Journal" until his death in 1917.

Mr. J. Bromley was elected Chairman of the Conference in question, and Mr. Geo. Moore, as Chairman of the Executive, welcomed the visitors. The other Executive members at the time

were Messrs. C. Shipley (Vice-Chairman), F. Robotham, R. Atkinson, F. Coombes, W. Clarken, D. Brodie, W. Clarke, W. Chapman, W. Stevenson, and G. Wride, with Messrs. M. J. Dickinson and R. T. Hatton, Trustees.

But it was not all jubilation that year. There were many fatal accidents to members, and the Secretary and four organisers were all busy running about to inquests and inquiries. The year 1906 had manifested weaknesses in the vacuum brake, and the Society had vigorously protested against the supine and, indeed, brutal custom of Local Government Board Inspectors to blame drivers for accidents they could not help. Grantham and Salisbury were painful examples, but later the facts were evidently realised privately, although the public had been prejudiced, for improvements were made to the vacuum. The facts are glaring now, for we got no more disasters of the same type. However, by 1909, attention was focussed on another type of accident, that to heavy, long trains, which the brake power could not hold. Engines were wilfully overloaded, and strong representations were made to Mr. G. R. Askwith at the Board of Trade on the matter.

There came to a head also, in the year 1909, a libel action which the Committee felt obliged to enter against Mr. T. T. Millman, in consequence of certain statements and circulars issued in respect to the Society. Towards the close of 1903, Mr. Millman became a member of the office staff, but three years later he assaulted the General Secretary, with whom he had never been very happy. For that offence he was instantly dismissed by the Executive, and then he seems to have had the encouragement of the A.S.R.S. to attack the Society. The action entered by Geo. Moore, M. J. Dickinson, and others of the Executive against Mr. Millman was heard in the King's Bench Division, November 2nd to 8th, 1909, by Mr. Justice Grantham and a special jury. They found that the charge made by the defendant was not true, that the circular issued was a libel, and that it was issued with malice, not with any sense of duty, but with a direct motive to injure the other Society. Judgment was therefore returned against Millman for £1,000 and costs.

A fraternal visit by Brother G. A. Allen, General Secretary of the Queensland Locomotive Enginemen, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association, caused Mr. Fox to proudly exclaim that they had cemented the whole of the English-speaking locomotivemen. Later in the year 1909, Messrs. D. Brodie (Scottish), C. Shipley (North), and R. Atkinson (Cheshire) retired from the Executive for re-election. Of the three retiring members, only Mr. Brodie returned, the newly-elected members being Mr. W. W. Cooke (Crewe) for Cheshire, and Mr. R. Hill (Bradford) for the North. Mr. Geo. Wride, of Cheltenham, was elected Chairman of the Executive, with Mr. W. Chapman, of Doncaster, as Vice-Chairman, and it was decided to issue ballot-papers to members, and to invite nominations for another organising secretary, the districts being arranged as follows :—Mr. Warwick, London ; Mr. J. Drummond, Scottish ; Mr. H. Parfitt, South Wales ; with Manchester organiser to be appointed. The Executive met on April 4th, 1910, to count the votes recorded, and found Mr. J. Bromley elected with 4,350 votes, the next highest being Mr. R. Atkinson, of Liverpool, with 1,730. Amongst the candidates was the late Mr. John Hunter, of Southport, who subsequently became a valuable President of the Society. A little later, Mr. H. J. Oxlade, of Willesden, was elected to the Executive as North London representative.

The Executive decided in 1910 to invite nominations for an Assistant Secretary to the Society, and thirteen names went to the ballot, Mr. Geo. Moore, the ex-President, being elected with 2,103 votes. This election caused other vacancies on the Executive, Mr. John Hunter being elected for Lancashire, Mr. D. Evans for South Wales, Mr. W. Clarken for the Midlands, and Mr. J. Healey for the North Midlands. Mr. Geo. Wride was re-elected Chairman, with Mr. R. Hill as Vice-Chairman.

The year, therefore, seemed to bring a new generation of responsible workers for the Society, and it is a fitting opportunity to recall the smallness of the Head Office at 44, Park Square, in 1903, the purchase of premises at 8, Park Square, in 1904, their renovation and alteration at a cost of £282, and the Centralisation of



Visit of American Delegates to Society's Conference, 1909.

J. BROMLEY

(President of Conference.)

G. MOORE

(President of A.S.L.E. & F.)

P. FENNELL

(B. of L. E.)

A. FOX

(General Secretary A.S.L.E. & F.)

W. CARTER

(President B. of L. F. & E.
Fraternal Delegate.)

Funds, which caused a considerable increase of office staff. In 1903 we had Messrs. Fox and Shuttleworth at headquarters, with Mr. Millman just starting, and Mr. Parfitt setting out as the first organiser. The following year we had Messrs. Fox, Shuttleworth, Millman, H. Saunders, A. E. Fox, and W. Parker. Then Mr. Millman passed out, Mr. Shuttleworth was put on a pension, Mr. Gregory came in, and in 1909 the staff consisted of Messrs. Fox, Shuttleworth (on the eve of retiring), Parker, Saunders, Gregory, Wheatley (killed in the European War after taking his commission and winning the Military Medal), and A. E. Fox, with Messrs. Parfitt, Drummond, and Warwick as organisers.

In May of 1910 Mr. Fox sailed again for America and Canada, as fraternal delegate to the American Brotherhood's Convention at St. Paul's, and during his tour had a long conversation with Ex-President Roosevelt at New York. He had previously been decorated with the medal of honorary membership of the Federated Locomotive Enginemen's Association of Australia, being the first person outside Australia to receive that honour. A few months later Mr. Moore came in as Assistant Secretary to direct administration affairs.

In the year 1910, following on the Osborne Judgment, no delegates were sent to the Labour Party Conference at Newport, and contributions to the Political Fund fell tremendously. South Leeds was abandoned as a constituency, after a visit by Messrs. John Hodge, M.P., and Ben Turner to the Executive over the strained relations between the A.S.R.S. and the A.S.L.E. & F. A local joint conference was recommended, to leave local branches to choose the candidate, and it was resolved "that we fail to see the wisdom of spending our members' money in contesting South Leeds." The Osborne Judgment made political contributions entirely optional on the part of members, and dealt a sharp blow at direct Labour representation. It did, however, compel attention to the need for payment of members, and in 1911 that principle came into operation.

"We are fighting every inch of the way against opposition which is uncalled for and unfair," declared the Report of 1910, but it was

a very successful fight, for the membership grew, and the total funds at the end of the year stood at £182,883. The movements of the year were in regard to eyesight and medical tests, a deputation to the Board of Trade having the support of Mr. Secker Walker, the eyesight specialist, who had testified to the value of corrective lenses for men on the footplate, both for security, protection, and comfort. These, and wages movements, and the slow reduction of hours, occupied attention until the opening of the crisis of 1911, when the Society, for the first time, sanctioned a national strike of all enginemen.

CHAPTER XIV

'Confiscation' Boards—The First National Strike—Mr. Asquith's Threat—A Prompt Reply—Bats and Bayonets—The Royal Commission—Wages and Dividends—Two Railway Disasters—The Sympathetic Strike—The 1912 Conference.

THE year 1911 will long be remembered by members, and by the public generally, as a most eventful year. The strike took its place in industrial history, and to railwaymen is a connecting link between 1907 and 1919. During the crisis of 1907, which was not confined to one year, a period of seventeen months passed between the time of placing the claims and the time of the Conciliation Boards meeting to discuss them. The whole scheme proved clogged and inadequate, and by 1911 the railway service was full of outstanding grievances. The Transport Workers' Strike at Liverpool proved a match to the combustible material, and, as will be shown later, the revolt spread to every station. The summer of that year saw soldiers parading with fixed bayonets in the streets of many towns, and it saw the Scots Greys and other regiments of cavalry riding about the cities to "protect the stations," as it was said. The Liberal Government adopted brutal and bullying and deceptive tactics, soon after winning their double victories of 1910 by the aid of thousands of railwaymen.

It is interesting to recall now that it was the last general election in which many thousands of organised workers voted Liberal or Conservative. A great awakening came with the next few years, and the Labour Party became a living thing. But in 1911 Mr.

Lloyd George played the same role as in 1907, repeating his "Confiscation Boards," as Mr. Fox called them, only more so. Mr. Asquith tried solemn warnings and threats, and Mr. Churchill tried intimidation by armed troops. Brutal conduct resulted, and at Llanelly two men were shot dead. About the declaration of the strike there was absolute unanimity between the four Executives of the A.S.R.S., A.S.L.E. & F., U.P.S.S., and the G.R.W.U. They held a joint meeting in Liverpool, where Mr. Bromley and Mr. Thomas had been previously watching the interests of railwaymen in a very delicate situation. The joint meeting sent representatives to meet Mr. Sydney Buxton, President of the Board of Trade, in Conference, and following that Conference the jointly-signed telegram was issued to call the strike at all stations. Mr. Churchill's mind at once turned to troops, and they were turned into towns in spite of the desire of the local authorities not to have them.

The managers were not required by the Government to discuss matters with the men. They preferred, apparently, to rely upon force, upon the parade of bullets and bayonets. A strike? It couldn't be! They announced that two-thirds of the men had refused to strike, and that the companies had large numbers of applications for work in their service. They announced, in fact, all the usual nonsense which is announced during a great strike, that the men were beaten and going back to work, and that an excellent service was being maintained. The Societies had sent a deputation to Mr. Lloyd George on August 1st, but it was received by Mr. McKenna. Nothing resulted, and Mr. Buxton made no further advance, and on August 17th the men were out, and the service disorganised and down at vanishing point. Friday morning, August 17th, saw the whole railway system in a state of chaos, and in a few hours 150 messages of "All men out" were received.

On the eve of the strike, Mr. Asquith met the union leaders, and used language like this :—

"We cannot allow the commerce of the country to be interfered with in the way it would be by a national dispute, and we want

you men to realise in the event of it reaching that stage, His Majesty's Government have decided that they will use all the civil and military forces at their disposal to see that the commerce of this country is not interfered with."

Not a word of promise about recognition or the justice of it; not a word for the eight hours day; not a word about starvation wages; not a word of hope for the workers, only a word for you men to realise what civil and military forces can do. There was only one reply to such cold talk—the strike was called.

"P.W.W.," writing in the "Daily News" of August 21st, the Monday after the strike, said:—

"Saturday brought the Government face to face with the tremendous and incalculable results of the repression policy. Every soldier was standing sentry or under call to do so. If more trouble arose the Reserves would have to be mobilised. It dawned upon the Government that, though the strike might be crushed in blood by Monday or Tuesday, other steps might be taken by Labour. The engineers, numbering 100,000, were ready to reinforce the railwaymen. The South Scottish miners were also actively preparing, a matter of great interest to Midlothian (Chief Liberal Whip's seat), Fifeshire, Asquith's seat, and, be it added, Dundee (Churchill's seat). Moreover, the whole South Wales coalfield, on which depends the Navy, needed but the word.

"Politically, it was obvious, in view of the attitude of the Labour Party, that the Government would fall during the autumn session if the policy of batons, bayonets and bullets continued over the week-end, solely, be it remembered, because the managers were not required by the Government to discuss matters with the men."

On Saturday morning, "The Times" published a statement issued from the Home Office at 11.30 the previous night:—

"The railway strike developed to-day all over the country, and produced a widespread, though partial, dislocation in the

railway services. Most of the trains, both for goods and passengers, have been got through, and the necessary services are well maintained.

"So far as the present information goes, considerably more than two-thirds of the railwaymen are remaining at their posts. Numerous applications are being received by the railway companies for employment. The companies report that the defections have not been in excess of expectations.

"It has not been found necessary to put in force special arrangements with regard to emergency traffic."

Referring to this statement in the course of discussion in the House of Commons, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald said: "The statements with which it opened were inaccurate; the expressions in the middle were nonsensical; and the effect in the end was simply to make the men more inclined to go on fighting."

The Joint Strike Committee saw that the Government was fighting the case for the companies, and promptly announced that all negotiations were at an end until they met the managers.

"With brief decision," wrote "P.W.W." on this point, "the entire position was abandoned by those acting for the Cabinet. A peremptory message was sent to the companies telling them that a round table conference must be conceded at once and unconditionally. As speedily, the companies on their side surrendered. At noon, and for 11½ hours afterwards, the managers sat face to face with the four union representatives, assisted by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Arthur Henderson. Recognition, on this occasion, was won on the brink of civil war."

Recognition had been won "on that occasion," but not permanently. The settlement was signed by representatives of the Board of Trade, the companies, and the unions, at eleven o'clock on Saturday evening, August 19th. The strike was terminated at once, the strikers were to return at once, to work amicably with blacklegs, and the Conciliation Boards were to be specially convened

to settle outstanding disputes. The Royal Commission idea was accepted, both sides to render all possible assistance. The following telegram was sent out to all branches :—

“ Joint Committee have settled strike. Victory for trade unionism. All men must return to work immediately.”

The Royal Commission, duly set up to investigate the working of the 1907 scheme, and to report what changes, if any, were desirable, held 29 sittings and examined 67 witnesses. Of its five members, two represented the companies and two the men, with an impartial chairman. The members were as follow :—

For the Railway Companies—Sir Thomas R. Ratcliffe Ellis, Secretary to the Mining Association of Great Britain ; Mr. Charles Gabriel Beale, Director of the London, City & Midland Bank, and Solicitor to the Midland Railway Company.

For the Men—Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P. for Barnard Castle, and Secretary to the North East Coast Conciliation Board since 1894 ; Mr. John Burnett, Chief Labour Correspondent to the Board of Trade, 1893-1907.

Impartial Chairman—Sir David Harrel, who had spent twenty years in the Royal Irish Constabulary.

The first official intimation of the coming storm was a letter from the Sandhills branch, dated June 27th, stating that the branch had been requested not to handle any goods during the seamen's strike, and if they were hooked on to a blackleg train, say, for Hull or other ports, what would be their position ? They asked if Mr. Bromley was available, and if it was not advisable for him to leave for Liverpool to watch developments. It was resolved : “ That until the General Secretaries of the unions have corresponded with our own General Secretary we cannot entertain applications made by our branches.” This did not assist the Sandhills branch much, did it ? Events, however, were becoming cumulative. The members would not handle blackleg goods, and soon Liverpool was a great storm centre. At Horwich the works were already closed because eleven unions

were fighting as one, and there had been a localised strike at Hull. The Barry men asked permission to tender their notices in April, in support of three A.S.R.S. men, said to have been victimised. Activities on other companies had rather better results, for on the G.W., for example, a new agreement secured immediate advances to 2,386 firemen (nearly 80 per cent. of the total) and 527 enginemen (nearly 18 per cent. of the total). It resulted in enginemen spending one year less at 5s 6d., and rising direct to 6s. 6d. instead of remaining at 6s. until promoted to a higher class, and receiving 7s. per day at least five years earlier than under the old terms. The firemen's 3s. a day was abolished, and the total concessions represented £17,000 a year more for members. Will Crooks was busy advocating his Trades Disputes Bill, and Mr. Fox had drafted a new Federation scheme, drawing a distinction on behalf of separate movements by locomotivemen. Subsequently, it was rejected by the A.S.R.S., for Mr. J. E. Williams wrote on October 5th, 1911, from Carlisle :—

“ Having given careful consideration to Mr. Fox's suggested scheme of Federation, and the further extension of sectionalism contained therein, we hereby decide that having regard to past experience, and the decision of the Executive Committee and the A.G.M., we cannot possibly entertain the idea of any such Federation scheme; but having, in our recent action through Joint Executive Councils, proved that solid and united action has been most successful, we are of opinion that one railway union will prove to be most beneficial for all railwaymen, and hereby agree to a Conference for the purpose of discussing and arranging terms of amalgamation.”

But great movements had been stirring in the interval between the submission and rejection of this scheme. The railway companies had given very little away under the Conciliation Scheme, and were determined to maintain it. There were loopholes for separate interpretation in every concession, and it cannot be wondered that men rose in a body. Since 1907 the position of companies had

vastly improved, but wages had remained almost stationary. Wages, indeed, were cut down to find the Conciliation Boards work in getting them up again, and the Board of Trade returns showed the following figures for average weeks in four years :—

Year		Number of Workers.		Average Weekly Earnings.	
				s.	d.
1907	...	478,670	...	25	10
1908	...	459,120	...	25	0
1909	...	459,444	...	25	4½
1910	...	463,019	...	25	9

Such were the average weekly earnings of men in the locomotive, coaching, goods and engineers' departments, exclusive of officers, clerks (very inadequately paid), and casual labourers. It will be seen that the wage bill of 1910 was less than that of 1907, and that immediately the Conciliation scheme came into operation there was a drop of 19,570 men in the four departments mentioned. In 1910 there were still 15,671 fewer employees than in 1907, although 1910 was the best year in their history, until grateful and comforting guarantees came along. In the first half of 1911 the L. & N.W. paid 6 per cent. and put away £100,000 to reserve, besides carrying forward a balance of £141,000. The Great Western paid 4½ per cent., and carried forward £120,426. The Great Northern apportioned good dividends to the various stocks, and carried forward a balance of £120,927. The Midland made a net increase of £181,000, and placed £30,000 to reserve. These big figures were due to "economies" largely at the expense of labour, and labour revolted against the unfair bargain.

It was on August 16th that the Joint Executives decided upon their ultimatum, 24 hours notice to withdraw all labour. Strike wires were sent out on the evening of the 17th, and on the morning of the 18th the weary wheels stood still. Two days were enough to show the Government that discretion was the better part of valour, and early on Sunday morning, August 20th, the telegrams were delivered announcing the resumption of work. Joint Strike

Committees had been formed in all centres, pickets put out just as promptly as Mr. Churchill's troops, and the men had just got into the routine of it when it was all over. Khaki, brilliant uniforms, and bayonets were profusely displayed at the London termini and the chief provincial centres, and for two days the country had a general aspect of civil war. When peace was proclaimed, some men were not so eager to resume, and at Liverpool Mr. Bromley was able to devote attention to the interests of the transport workers and tramwaymen. The latter were refused reinstatement by the Tramways Committee, and a very tough fight had to be made against insults and threats to get them reinstated. Mr. Bromley had spent three strenuous weeks in Liverpool, and even his great physical strength was worn down to the point of collapse. It is needless to add that mass meetings, many of them, were held all over the country.

Commenting on the effects of the strike, Mr. Fox wrote :—

“ I wish to say that we have proved conclusively that there is no need for the amount of emphasis laid upon the question of amalgamation. Certainly, we have proved that collective action can be taken with even more effect through the medium of Federation than can be expected through amalgamation, and certainly if anything were needed to prove that sectional organisation was the correct course the recent strike and the response by the members at the request of the Executive Committee provides that proof. I am satisfied that railwaymen would be well advised not to press the question of amalgamation, and go wholeheartedly for first getting the men organised. That is the real essential.”

The Conciliation Scheme approved by the Royal Commission of 1911 for dealing with questions affecting wages, hours, or conditions of service, continued to operate into the war period, because the 1914 scheme was cancelled in October of that year. The 1911 scheme provided that if the employees forming a grade, or combination of grades having a common interest, wished to

bring to the notice of the company a matter affecting their rates of pay, hours of labour, or conditions, a petition should be presented, signed by at least 25 per cent. of those concerned. The petition was to name a suitable number of employees as a deputation, which deputation should be received by the company within fourteen days of the petition, and give a reply in writing within 28 days of the petition. The provisions were that in cases concerning individuals or a depot, a local superintending officer might hear the case, and report to the company. If the company proposed to reduce the rates of wages, or increase hours of labour, or otherwise adversely alter the conditions of service, the matter was referred to the appropriate Conciliation Board, after the company had circularised the men concerned, giving notice that the matter would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting, the circular to be issued not less than one month before the date of the meeting. If isolated individuals only were affected by such an intention, they could remit the question to the Conciliation Board, and if that Board determined it was not reasonable, the matter could be adjusted from the date the alteration was made. There were still established on each railway a suitable number of Conciliation Boards to deal with questions referred to them relating to rates of pay, hours of labour, or conditions of service, other than matters of management or discipline, of all wage-earning employees. A Joint Staff, having no separate Conciliation Board, was allotted to one or other of the owning companies, for election purposes, and be dealt with through the Conciliation Boards of that company. The employers' side of a Conciliation Board was composed of one or more representatives from each district, elected from among themselves, and the grouping of grades into sections, and the division of the company's system into areas, and the number of representatives, followed the arrangements for Sectional Boards, under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme of 1907. Elections of representatives of the employees were held under the supervision of the Board of Trade, from those who were employees in the section and district, each nomination paper being signed by not less than 20 adult employees of the

candidate's section and district. The Board of Trade prepared, received, and counted the voting papers, and published the names of members of each Board, whose term of office expired November 6th, 1914, but was generally continued owing to war conditions. Each Board had a chairman, who was not a director of any railway company, and selected from a panel constituted by the Board of Trade. For purposes of electing a chairman, the employees invested two of their number with plenary powers to attend a special combined meeting, along with the company representatives, to select the chairman from the panel mentioned. The chairman, thus appointed under the Conciliation Act of 1896, acted for all the Boards on a company's system, and each side appointed a "leading member" to preside alternately in his absence. Each side had a secretary, to take part in discussion and act as advocate, but not to vote unless he were a member of the Board. Meetings were called half-yearly, or oftener as required, and all settlements arrived at, whether by agreement or by decision of the Chairman, were final and binding. For a summary of the 1917 Scheme see Chapter 19.

In the early weeks of the year, attention was focussed upon two disastrous accidents attributable to errors by signalmen. One was at Willesden Junction, on the L. & N.W., and the other at Hawes Junction, on the Midland. In the Willesden case a local passenger train, Watford to Euston, was standing at the No. 4 platform, when it was run into by the 8.30 a.m. Watford to Broad Street, on December 5th, 1910. The driver of the colliding train, Geo. Hall, was one of our members, and he and his mate, W. G. Humphrey, stuck to their posts after they saw the inevitable before them on rounding the bend. Five lives were lost and several people injured. The Midland Railway Scotch express disaster happened on December 24th, at 5.46 a.m., between Hawes Junction and Kirkby Stephen, a very lonely part of the system. The express had stopped at Skipton, and while travelling at a high speed with two engines, Nos. 48 and 549, they overtook and ran into two light engines proceeding in the same direction, and on the same line, to Carlisle. The express engines plunged into the side of the cutting,

and there the totally wrecked train burst into flames, six coaches out of the eight being burnt down to the frames. Of the dozen or more people killed at the time, or dying subsequently, this fire was responsible for several.

In the autumn of 1911 came the Irish Railway Strike, very ably handled by Mr. John Drummond, as acting Secretary for the E.C., he having preceded them on September 19th to Dublin. The Committee placed on record their very high appreciation of his services. Early in 1912 came the closing of accounts for the national strike in August, the Society's portion of expenditure being £2,561. The sympathetic strike became a serious issue in 1912, owing to the national coal strike, and the use of the railways for the conveyance of blackleg labour and troops to defeat the miners. The Executive met specially to consider this matter, and advised members not to refuse to work soldiers or coal traffic, and expressed strong opposition to the sympathetic strike. In a circular to branches, Mr. Fox wrote :—

“ It is impossible to sanction the participation of our members in any strike that is not directly connected with their employment. We do not associate ourselves with the principle of the sympathetic strike, for it would mean that our members were involved in all industrial disputes.”

Mr. Fox had also a message on the increasing expenses charged to the Society for various work done by members. He had worked as a fireman at 3s. a day, and said :—

“ I speak now as one of those who has worked and paid towards building up our Society to its present splendid position. I speak as one of those who has been responsible for opening branches and bringing hundreds of members into our organisation. I did it out of the interest I had in the members, and that alone, for I did not so much as charge even railway fare or anything else, to say nothing about days off to enable me to do it.”

Mr. W. Stevenson, of Slades Green, had come on to the Executive as North London representative in October of 1911, Mr. W. W.

Cooke was re-elected the following year, when Mr. C. Shipley took the place of Mr. R. Hill, and Mr. R. Scott took the place of Mr. Brodie. The Triennial Meeting of Delegates was held in the Albert Hall, June 3rd to 10th, and it decided to invest £1,000 in the "Daily Citizen." There were Irish delegates amongst the 149 who attended, and Mr. Timothy Shea was present to convey the greetings of the American Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen. Mr. C. Shipley was elected Chairman, and at the reception by the Lord Mayor, Mr. Fox stated that when he came in as Secretary he found a Society of 8,000 members in 118 branches, with funds of £97,000. That day they had 270 branches, 23,600 members, and £186,000 in reserve. None would think then that Mr. Fox would not again meet the Triennial Conference, or that he was so near the end of his intensely strenuous and able work for the Society. The business of the week included a considerable revision of rules to make way for an Approved Society under the National Health Insurance Act of 1911, the Executive Council being empowered to amend the general rules and to carry into effect any further amendments found necessary. There was considerable discussion on political action, and the deep effect of the Osborne Judgment on funds already depleted by South Leeds. Mr. Fox reported the receipt of an address signed by Albert Bellamy, President of the Joint Executive during the 1911 strike, on behalf of all Societies, which declared that "the diplomacy and ability which he displayed, together with the advice he so readily placed at their disposal, enabled them to overcome most of the difficulties of the position." A long discussion on Mr. Conlon's motion for amalgamation led to an interesting episode during Mr. Bromley's speech in replying to the mover. Alluding to the wages of locomotive men, Mr. Bromley proceeded :—

"Now just to test it, how many men in this Conference, for a sixty hours week, knock out £2 5s. a week? How many? Hand ups! (A few hands were held up). Twenty at the most. Those men at this Congress who for a sixty hours week do not make 30s.? A great many hands were held up.

"A Delegate : And after 21 years service !

"Mr. Bromley : We have firemen in this country getting past middle life, with a wife and children, who are not getting 25s. a week. I am going to contend that the man with a guinea, with a uniform, with regular hours of employment, set against the man with 25s., who wears out more clothing, who carries out food that is destroyed, he is financially as badly off in the goods of this world as the man with 20s.

"A Delegate : Worse."

That is a vivid sidelight on the poor conditions existing in 1912. A very long and important discussion on the question of amalgamation ended in the adoption, by 133 votes to 7, of a resolution instructing the Executive : " That the policy of Federation with other railway trade unions must be pursued, but they must not entertain any scheme of amalgamation with any other body than that of men following our own particular calling." This has several times since been re-affirmed as the established policy of the Society. The Conference also decided to appoint a fifth organiser.

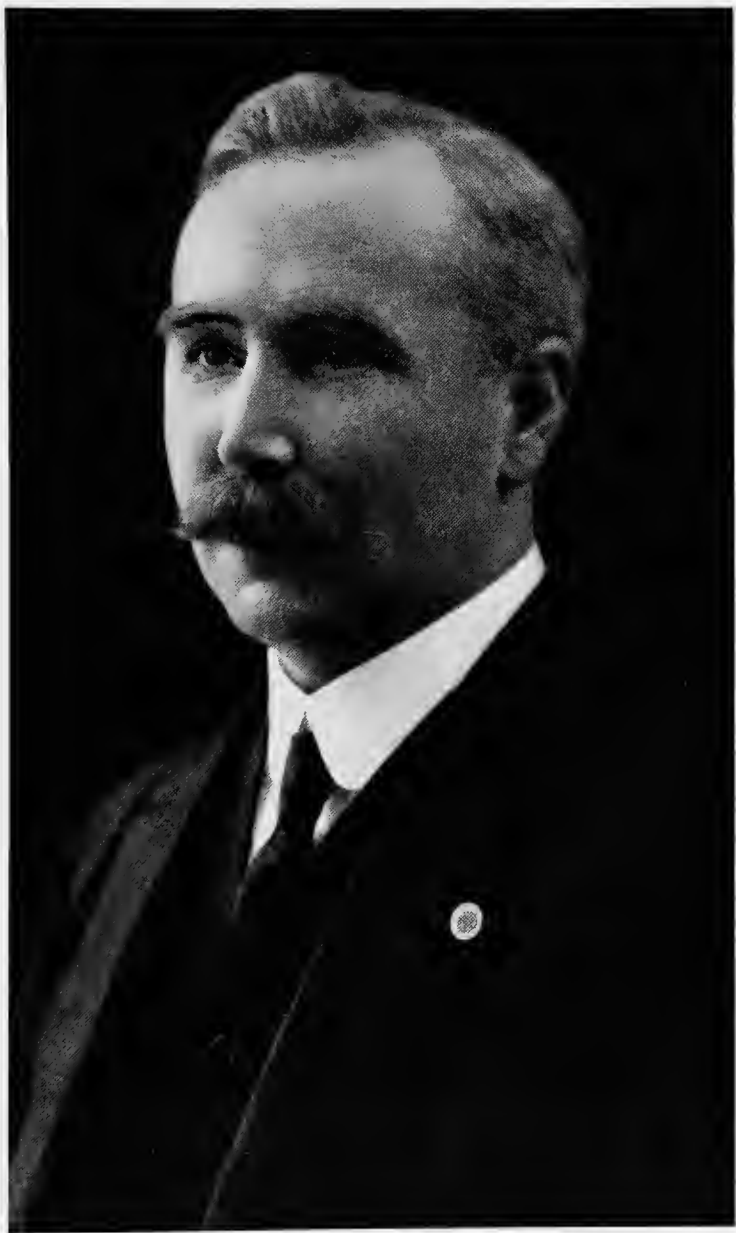
December of that year brought the Driver Knox episode at Gateshead. He had been arrested on a charge of drunkenness and assault when off duty. The latter charge was dismissed, and he was fined 5s. and costs for drunkenness. Following this the North Eastern Company reduced him to the position of pilot driver, and a storm arose at once. The North Eastern men would not have it, and a strike developed. There was keen newspaper controversy about the rights of drivers, and Messrs. Drummond and Bromley were dispatched to the troubled area. The Executive moved to York on December 9th, and proceeded to Newcastle, where the men had formed a strike committee. This body was consulted and the Chief Officers of the Company approached. They admitted that drivers might do what they liked in their spare time, but drew a firm line against drunkenness. All men were reinstated without prejudice.

CHAPTER XV

Illness of Mr. Fox—A "Daily Express" Canard—End of a Strenuous Life—A Difficult Time—Local Strikes in 1913—The N.U.R.—Conciliation Again—Aisgill Disaster—The Eight Hours Ballot—Mr. Bromley Elected General Secretary—A New Era Opens.

THE 1912 Report was signed by Mr. Geo. Moore, with an expression of regret for its late arrival, and that for 1913 was signed by Mr. Moore as "Acting General Secretary." Mr. Fox had been obviously unwell for some months, his paleness being very marked, and early in 1913 he had to stand aside from the many activities he had tried to control personally.

The late General Secretary was 57 years old, and had held office for twelve years. He had joined the Society in 1886 at Mexborough, and was for many years secretary of that branch. He became E.C. representative for the Yorkshire district, as I have recorded, and in 1901 became President. When the crisis of 1911 came, and the companies remained obdurate to reason or appeal, it was Mr. Fox who moved, at Liverpool, the dramatic resolution to give a general 24 hours notice. He was similarly stirred, despite his ill-health, over the Guard Richardson case, on the Midland, in 1913. When the funeral procession went to Woodhouse Cemetery, several veterans, like Messrs. Shuttleworth, Mogg, Duckworth, Dickinson, and Hatton were present, and a magnificent floral cross was placed by the American Brotherhood. Resolutions of condolence poured in from all quarters, fully indicating the place won in railway affairs by Mr. Fox.



MR. J. BROMLEY,
General Secretary from 1914.

Mr. Fox had a serious breakdown shortly after the Conference of 1912, which in itself formed a climax to his career. Mr. Geo. Wride, of Cheltenham, had been elected President for the year 1913, with Mr. W. Stevenson as Vice-President, and at the time of their election by the Executive, Mr. Fox wrote :—

“ I am sorry to have to inform you that right in amongst the thick of business I was taken ill after arriving home ; or rather I ought to say that the illness under which I have been suffering for some three years now arrived at a climax, and I had to go to bed. By the doctor's orders I was to stay there for a while, and this I hope to do. I am pleased to tell you that now I am feeling much better, and hope to continue to do so.”

The General Secretary was able to attend the 1913 Conference, which voted him an increase of £50 in his salary, and three months leave of absence, as he had taken no holiday since 1910. The Executive relieved him of all duties, and insisted upon him taking leave of absence for the period. A letter to this effect was issued to leading members of those Conciliation Boards of which Mr. Fox was secretary. Branches were at the same time informed that :—

“ It has been found necessary to relieve Mr. Fox of duty as General Secretary for three months. For some considerable time his continued ill-health has retarded the work of the organisation, not only through delay in dealing with outside work, but through inability to supervise the indoor or office work at Leeds. Whilst having every sympathy with Mr. Fox in his illness, and knowing he had also been worried by domestic troubles, we cannot allow his illness and other troubles to destroy the efficiency of the organisation. In these circumstances we were compelled to remove him as aforesaid stated.”

That notification was, in fact, a patient and very guarded statement of the difficulties caused for the Executive. Mr. Fox had been a most strenuous, able, and earnest worker for the Society, but he lacked the gift of directing others to share the burden of great administration. The Head Office was steadily and essentially

becoming sectionalised, its activities varying from heavy correspondence to the Editorship of the "Journal" and the direction of a big Approved Society. Over all these, as well as direction of office routine, Mr. Fox sought to exercise direct personal control, in addition to the Conciliation Board work, then in a state of flux, and all external negotiations with companies. The effort caused his life to be full of rush, with many night journeys and irregular and inadequate food. Over all this he frequently took the platform on the Amalgamation or Federation issue, and the effect of it all came suddenly. By December of 1912 he had ceased to be an effective force, and his ill-health was added to serious domestic trouble by the painful illness of his younger son Charles, who died in October of 1913. The Executive and Assistant Secretary had an anxious time up to December of 1913, when Mr. Fox again relapsed.

By September of 1913 the membership had passed 30,000, a very gratifying total, and the Executive had several new members—Messrs. J. Healey (Sheffield) for the North Midland; John Hunter (Southport) for Lancashire; W. Gamble (Derby) for the Midlands, and Geo. Wixson (Cardiff) for South Wales. The 1913 A.A.D., over which Mr. R. Hill, of Bradford, presided, had decided to take a ballot of all members on a payment of 1s. per year to a Political Fund, any member being able to sign an exemption clause from the payment. The result of this ballot was declared by Mr. Wride, the President, on October 7th, as follows:—For the payment, 7,839; against, 3,841. This was immediately followed by a startling and untrue article in the "Daily Express," alleging that £16,000 were missing and that the General Secretary had been relieved of duty for three months. Action was instantly taken by the Society's solicitors, and the "Daily Express," along with one or two journals which followed it, issued an apology and letter of explanation. The simple fact was that the Annual Report showed for the first time a deficit, which was £16,000, and the simple explanation was that the miners' strike of 1912 had cost the Society £24,000 in out-of-work pay, while the balance on the ordinary work of the year was

£8,000. It had nothing whatever to do with the Secretary's illness and absence.

On Sunday, October 19th of 1913, Mr. Fox resumed responsibility for the Society, but he had to again relinquish it in December. The Executive assembled on March 17th of 1914, and learned that the General Secretary had not been able to attend to the office during the year, except for a short time on two occasions, owing to his continued and now really serious illness. On Sunday, March 22nd, information was received at the office of the death of Mr. Fox that day, and the Executive rose as a mark of their deep sympathy. Votes of condolence and regret were carried, and it was arranged that Mr. Geo. Moore should undertake the duties of General Secretary until other arrangements were made. On Friday, March 27th, the Executive adjourned at 12 noon to attend the funeral. The offices were closed, and the staff also attended, along with representatives from nearly thirty branches, from the Leeds Trades Council, and the N.U.R. Members of the Executive acted as bearers.

“We have to place here on permanent record our regret at the loss we have sustained by the death of our late General Secretary, Mr. A. Fox, and realising the difficulties he has had to face in the past, we must give all credit to him for his efforts on our behalf as a Society.”

Such was the first sentence of the 33rd Annual Report, issued in May of 1914. It continued that, “In the second place we have to rejoice at the continued success of the Society. We have again to report remarkable progress, and we represent a good majority of locomotive enginemmen. We have not had a big industrial dispute, but we have had several strikes on a small scale.” It reported for the year—during which Mr. Ivor Gregory was elected organiser—that the membership had increased by 5,700, standing at 32,200, with total funds of £176,018.

Mr. Gregory had begun duty as organiser on February 1st, 1913, being elected with a vote of 5,700, the next highest being

Mr. Hunter 2,018 and Mr. A. Mason 1,092. He had to reside in Leeds for a time to assist at Head Office, and then later moved to Carlisle. Shortly before, Miss Nicholson had joined the office staff as first lady typist, and an examination for clerical posts available to men from the footplate resulted in the appointment of Messrs. J. Wilson, Sowerby Bridge ; A. E. Wintle, Doncaster ; J. T. Crossland, Nottingham ; A. C. Price, Birmingham ; and Mr. Gosling, Bradford. The Head Office staff to-day includes some twenty members of the N.U.C., several of whom are ladies.

Edge Hill was disturbed over the case of Driver Gore, who was dismissed following a collision at Wavertree, and the demand for his reinstatement was in the hands of Mr. Bromley. Eventually, a Board of Trade Inquiry was conceded for January 10th, at the demand of the Society, the decision being sent to all branches on the L. & N.W. in view of the strike attitude being general. Members of the Executive were also deputed to attend meetings on Sunday, January 12th. This was hardly put right before, in February, came the case of Guard Richardson, of Normanton, who was dismissed for refusing to load his train beyond the brake power. He also was reinstated after a strike had become imminent. The Trade Union Act of 1913 had an important bearing on the Society, and the solicitors were instructed to revise the rules in accordance with that Act. The strike in Dublin also came into prominence in the Society, for several of the Welsh members refused to handle "blackleg" traffic. Engineman G. James, who felt very keenly the events transpiring in Dublin, refused on November 7th of 1913 to shunt a train partly composed of Dublin traffic, while he was occupied in shunting at Llandilo Junction. He was sent to the loco. depot, and on again reporting for duty he was suspended for ten days and sent home. On November 17th he was paid a week's wages in lieu of notice. On hearing of this dismissal, Engineman Reynolds reported himself off duty until James was allowed to resume. An open meeting was held at Llanelly on the following day, at which the reinstatement of James was demanded, and failing

that reinstatement, they would withdraw their labour. Driver James was refused permission to accompany a deputation to Mr. Potter and Mr. Churchward, and on November 30th, at Swansea, a further mass meeting asked the E.C. to negotiate the reinstatement of James with the G.W.R., failing which they would withdraw their labour. Reynolds then decided to report for duty, but on doing so was told his services were no longer required. This looked like victimisation, and Driver Squance led the strike previously decided upon to challenge that arbitrary attitude. Complete reinstatement was secured, and views expressed about the limits of the sympathetic strike method. Generous funds were also raised by the Society and its members for the Dublin strikers. The Executive first contributed £200 and then £100 weekly until it sent £1,400, supplemented by over £600 given by the members in separate branch efforts.

The National Union of Railwaymen came into being on March 29th of 1913, the negotiations having proceeded during 1912. It comprised three of the four railway unions, the A.S.L.E. & F. adhering to the maxim, "Organise your trade, Federate your industry," an attitude which was perfectly consistent with Conciliation methods, and of great advantage to members. The avowed object of the N.U.R. is organisation by industry, a principle which in practice leads to many incongruities. The ballots to secure fusion were long drawn out, owing to the need of securing a two-thirds majority under the Act of 1876. As in our Society, the ruling body is the Annual General Meeting, the Executive Committee, consisting of the President, the General Secretary, and 24 other members, chosen by ballot on the single transferable vote system for six electoral districts. In each of these districts the members are classified into four groups: (1) Locomotive, (2) Traffic, (3) Goods and Cartage, (4) Engineering shops and permanent way. The 1912 Constitution has been several times revised, Mr. C. T. Cramp has become Industrial General Secretary, as chief lieutenant to Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., P.C., and the Executive cannot now conclude settlements without the sanction of a General Meeting.

Late in the year 1913 the Board of Trade wrote inviting suggestions from the Society for the prevention of railway accidents. Branches were communicated with at once, to secure all possible suggestions, and a deputation appointed to meet the Board of Trade, consisting of Messrs. G. Wride (who was re-elected President for 1914), Oxlade, Shipley, Stevenson and Moore. The points to be emphasised by this deputation were: (1) Heavy loading; (2) Better brake power; (3) Efficient signalling; (4) Timing of trains; (5) Practical locomotive men as Board of Trade Inspectors; (6) The impracticability of Rule 55. The Inquiry was proceeding, and evidence had been partly taken, when the European War broke out in August of 1914, and all proceedings were suspended for its duration.

In November of 1913 the N.U.R. gave notice of a desire to terminate the Conciliation Scheme of 1911, and the A.S.L.E. & F. sent in notice to secure amendments. In reply to these notices the companies appointed a Special Committee of seven members to meet the Societies jointly, an important action, because hitherto, except for urgent matters, on the North Eastern and Great Western lines, the companies had evaded direct recognition. The Executives of the two Societies met jointly to arrange a common policy, the points submitted being:—

- 1.—Recognition.
- 2.—An extended scope for Conciliation Boards to include questions of discipline and management.
- 3.—The classes of workers to be included.
- 4.—The abolition of deputations and petitions.
- 5.—The composition of the Boards.
- 6.—The question of the impartial chairman.

Upon questions Nos. 2, 3, and 4 there was agreement, but on No. 5 the Conference broke up. It was the justifiable insistence by the A.S.L.E. & F. for a separate Board on each railway for locomotivemen, and the disagreement of the N.U.R. was complete. The Society has always recognised the important value attached

to the long years of experience and training which go to the making of a driver, whose position can in no sense be likened to that of the goods porter or drayman. They could not, therefore, place their destiny in the hands of an all-grades meeting. This was a long and involved question, causing many special meetings. but eventually, in March of 1914, the efforts to develop a Joint Scheme broke down, and in April the two Executives met the Special Committee of the companies separately. On this matter, too, the war rang down the curtain for a time.

The nation was in a state of interesting confusion. The Titanic, the latest great liner, had struck an iceberg and gone down on her first voyage in 1912; motor cars were becoming popular, and aeroplanes were attaining success; there were suffragettes in nearly every gaol, and Ireland was full of trouble. The doctors had finished their protest against the Insurance Act, and were enrolling huge panels. It was found that 80 doctors had 2,000 to 3,000 patients each; twenty had 3,000 to 4,000; three had 4,000 to 5,000; and three others had 5,000 to 7,000 patients each. A train-ferry had been started across the Channel, destined to be greatly developed during the war. In August of 1913 came the Colchester disaster, an express being wrecked by running into a light engine on the line, while in September came a worse event at Aisgill. Driver Samuel Caudle, the driver of the second express from Carlisle, missed the danger signals at Mallerstang, and ran into an express timed a few minutes earlier, which had been brought to a stand at Aisgill for want of steam, owing to poor fuel on the long incline. Caudle had himself been in great difficulties from the same cause, and was too occupied with injector and pressure questions to "take a second look," as he usually did, at the signals. He was found guilty of culpable negligence, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, but so strong was the feeling stirred over the case, and the hardship of the drivers, that the Home Secretary ordered his release. Cleaners' strikes at Bolton, Bury, and Blackburn, on the L. & Y., were keeping Mr. Bromley very busy, and it was found that many of these cleaners were firing passenger

and other main line trains for 3s. 9d. daily. In this same period, the "Daily Citizen" was causing a good deal of anxiety, as it continued to do until its demise in 1915. The Society had loaned it a sum of £1,000, and gave over £500 in a year in the form of advertising.

A ballot for or against the 8 hours day was returnable on March 19th of 1914, and it resulted in the demand which had its climax in February of 1919, to be referred to later.

On July 16th of 1914, the Executive proceeded to London to again interview the General Managers respecting the Conciliation Scheme, and then returned to Leeds to check the ballot vote for the election of a new General Secretary. It was declared as follows:—J. Bromley, 5,235; G. Moore, 4,249; I. Gregory, 3,641; A. Mason, 1,347; W. W. Cooke, 622; B. Wild, 128; G. Wride, 76; W. J. Jones, 49; G. James, 35. It was thereupon decided that ballot papers be issued at once, in accordance with Rule 13, to secure a decision between the two highest candidates, Messrs. Bromley and Moore, the second ballot to be returnable not later than October 7th. This final ballot was checked on October 9th and 10th, and the result announced as follows:—

MR. J. BROMLEY (Longsight) 7,942

MR. GEO. MOORE (Leeds No. 2) 6,438

Mr. J. Hunter, President of the Election Committee, thereupon declared Mr. Bromley to be the duly elected General Secretary, and Mr. Geo. Wride, President of the Executive, congratulated Mr. Bromley, followed by Mr. Moore, who supplemented these remarks, and assured Mr. Bromley of hearty co-operation. Returning his thanks to members, through the "Journal," for his election, Mr. Bromley wrote: "I will earnestly endeavour to prove myself worthy of that confidence, and will try by strict and earnest attention to my duty, with all the energy I possess, to safeguard the very important interests entrusted to my care."

Mr. Geo. Moore, in returning his thanks to his many supporters, said: "I shall support Mr. Bromley, in his difficult position as General Secretary, to the utmost of my ability. I am hoping we

shall be able to work together to the advantage of our organisation." Looking back now, after seven years experience of Messrs. Bromley and Moore, as General and Assistant Secretaries respectively, we can bear faithful witness to the fact that both of them have amply fulfilled their pledges, and done more still. It is largely due to their zeal, loyalty, and co-operation that the Society, in the seven years 1914-1921, made history in lumps. Much became possible that was not possible before, and membership, funds, and prestige grew apace.

Mr. Bromley was born at Hadnall, near Shrewsbury, on July 16th, 1876, and was therefore still a young man, bringing the priceless assets of a strong physique, a clear mentality, and a class conscious mind to bear upon a great task in which he was destined to have need of all of them. The General Secretary of the new and greater era began his railway life as a cleaner at Shrewsbury in 1890, and was doing much spare firing and some main line work at the age of sixteen. He was registered fireman in March of 1896, and so became qualified to join the Society of which he was destined to become the central figure. Within two months we find him in branch meetings, serving as fireman and enthusiastic but unofficial organiser at Shrewsbury, Gobowen, Aberdare, and Worcester, on the Great Western. He was promoted driver in 1905, and removed from Worcester to Southall (London), between which two branches he put in eight years service as branch secretary. He first attended the Triennial Conference in 1903, and in the same year was elected a member of the G.W.R. deputation. When the Conciliation Board Scheme was launched he was elected representative of the locomotivemen in the London District. He was President of the memorable Triennial Conference of 1909, and elected Organising Secretary in 1910, being also Secretary of the Locomotive Conciliation Boards on the Hull and Barnsley and the North Staffordshire Railways. Thereafter his activities knew no pause. I can trace his new lead through the last eleven years, first inspiring a campaign for 30,000 members, for 35,000 when that was accomplished, for 40,000 immediately after, for 50,000

the next year, and so up the ladder to 60,000, and eventually and most successfully to 75,000. It was his hand pointed the way, and his example of hard work that inspired all the rest. Silver medals for securing 25 new members went out constantly, hundreds of them, Locomotivemen knew that in every sense their Society was firm as a rock, and general managers learned a deeper respect for the footplate fraternity.

It was singular that just as the Society launched away upon a new and really great era, its first member, William Ulliyott, of Sheffield, No. 1 on the register of branch No. 1, should pass away. Ulliyott died on September 27th of 1914, aged 72 years, full of honour, and proud of the fame of the Society he nursed in its infancy. Its funds were a shade and protection to him during his declining years. Charles Perry, who had written him the historic letter which finds its place in this volume, had died some years earlier, leaving his son a full-benefit member of Paddington branch. Ulliyott had begun his railway life at York in 1853.

Now to pick up one or two pre-war matters of history, just trifles not connected with the bigger movements that continued through years. On Friday, July 14th of 1913, Mr. Moore and Mr. W. Hudson, M.P., interviewed Lord Bessborough, Chairman of Directors, and the General Manager of the L.B. & S.C. Railway, to demand the front end of the trains on the newly electrified system for locomotivemen exclusively. The men made a firm stand in support of the deputation named, and Lord Bessborough signed the agreement which gave to locomotivemen the exclusive option on the electric motorman's position. The company sought to get six men from the traffic department, who had been trained, accepted for the positions, but the delegates refused to do that. The position carried the steam drivers' rate of wages, and the agreement thus secured formed a precedent, followed later by the L. & N.W. and other electrified lines. On the L. & N.W., too, the agreement included high rent allowances, and a guaranteed week on the average basis of 240 hours for each four weeks.

Sir Albert Stanley was knighted on June 22nd of 1914, and 20,000

employees of the T.O.T. concerns (trains, omnibuses and trams) subscribed to a gift of a silver tea and coffee service. The Triple Alliance of the Miners' Federation, the Transport Workers' Federation, and the N.U.R. was being launched, and it came in for very sharp criticism by the National Federation of Enginemen assembled at Chester, at which our delegates were Messrs. Wride, Moore, and Cooke.

Then the clouds of war lowered in the sky and darkened all Europe. We had better close the chapter.

CHAPTER XVI

The Declaration of War—Wages and Prices—Partial Employment—
The First Bonus—Profiteering—Members Enlisting—The
“ White Feather ” Taunt—Mr. Mason’s Election—A Writ
for Libel—Another Bonus (October, 1915)—A Trying
Time (September, 1916)—Members in Public Life.

WAR on the colossal scale had been declared on August 4th of 1914, and it laid a chill touch upon everybody and every organisation. All Europe was involved, and half the civilised world seemed to be rising to arms. The cliffs reverberated with the roar of heavy guns barking hate at sea, and on land there was an all-pervading presence of khaki, of lumbering guns, and of grey paint. Motor vans, horses, and horse vans were seized, and on the first day of the war the British railways were taken over by the Government under The Regulation of Forces Act of 1871, being afterwards administered by a Railway Executive Committee, composed of the General Managers of the most important systems.

Owing to the national emergency, a mighty truce was called over all internal questions, including wage questions, at the very time when the revised National Programme was ready for presentation. It eclipsed the eight hour day, and for some time the revised Conciliation Board Scheme too. An agreement was reached on October 1st, 1914, providing that the existing schemes should continue in operation until six weeks’ notice had been given on either side. Sectional Conciliation Boards were retained, but the number of such was reduced to four on each system. Conciliation stood

in abeyance in that manner until the second war bonus was conceded twelve months later, and in the agreement on that question one of the conditions specified that the new Conciliation Scheme should be ready whenever the companies might have occasion to reconsider the war bonus, and give notice of their intention to pay it no longer. This notice, it was provided, could be given immediately the Government control of the railways ceased.

While railway directors and shareholders were guaranteed profits during the period of control, equal each year to the profits of 1913, no wage or work guarantee was made to the men, and within a few months under employment was a marked feature in several parts of the country. The profits of the year 1913, it should be understood, were 52 millions, against an average of 48 millions, because the companies had recently increased their carriage charges to recoup themselves "for the additional cost in awarding better conditions to labour." Thus capital made a very good bargain, and the Government, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had also made a very good bargain. What then of our men? Having generously abandoned for the time their National Programme, including the eight hour day, they found each month of 1914 marked by a continual rise in the cost of living, while profiteering was rampant. In January of 1915 discontent was general, and the Executive sent to the companies a demand for an all-round increase of 5s. to meet the changed conditions.

"It is not desirable that there should be internal strife," said the report for the year 1914, "but it is quite sure that in the future, when the war is over, the workers who are now fighting in defence of their country will have to continue their struggle for a fair share of the capital they create."

No one realised then how long the war would last, and what terrible dimensions it would assume, but the struggle of the railway workers for fair consideration by those who were so pleased with their good bargains began in its first month and continued to its

last. On August 24th of 1914 Mr. Geo. Moore addressed the following letter to the Railway Executive Committee :—

“ While not desiring to increase your difficulties at the present time, I am compelled to write in reference to the position of locomotivemen who are employed by the various railway companies in this country. Since the war commenced these men have had to hold themselves in readiness to go on duty for the purpose of dealing with troop trains and other Government requirements, and have been called out at varying times. The annual holidays, which some of these men should have been having at the present time, have been cancelled, and while we do not complain of that, and are prepared to do our duty in support of the Government in the present crisis as loyally as anyone else, we find that—in spite of restrictions placed upon the men and demands for the whole of their time to be placed at the disposal of the companies—notably the Midland, the Great Northern, and the Great Central railways are not paying the men a week’s wages, contending that they do not actually work, and therefore are not entitled to a week’s wage. This is, of course, increasing the economic difficulties of the country, as well as causing serious complaints from the men, and we should like the position defining. As our members are now State servants, they contend they are entitled to a full week’s wage.”

That was the first difficulty to be righted, and a wage adjustment was pressing close. The Railway Executive proved hostile to the demand for 5s., a sum overdue before the war began, and urgently due now owing to rising prices. There was restlessness and talk of a strike, but eventually, in February of 1915, it was agreed :—

“ That 3s. advance should be conceded to railwaymen whose rate of wages was less than 30s. a week, and 2s. to those above 30s.”

This was a little more than half of the demand made, for in the aggregate it represented £20,000 a week more than a uniform 2s. 6d. would have done, a sharp indication of what a large

number of men got less than 30s. weekly. The companies, and not the Government, negotiated that matter, and the award being termed a "war bonus," rather than a permanent wage increase, formed a very important precedent for the whole war period. The alternative to a war bonus was separate negotiation with every company, under the Conciliation Scheme, and that meant much delay and difficulty. There was no allowance, it will be noticed, for boys under 18, and the whole subject was re-opened four months later, in reference both to men and boys. The Executive decided, in April, that Mr. Bromley should make application to the companies with a view to pressing for the carrying out of the original demand for an increase of 5s. per week all round, including those under 18 years of age. On the general question of profiteering and increased prices, the following resolution was carried :—

"This Executive, representing 34,000 locomotivemen, is satisfied that the present labour unrest is due chiefly to the mine-owners, shipowners, and other employers, and middle men, making money out of the war, and exploiting workmen at the expense of their patriotism. We therefore call upon the Government to fix prices for wheat, coal, and meat, and thus reduce the unrest to a minimum."

A war bonus of 2s. weekly was awarded to the staff, to be retrospective from March 1st, independent of the annual advances due in May. Mr. John Hunter, who had been a member for twenty years, was elected President for the year, with Mr. Worthy Cooke as Vice-President, and during much of the war period these two were prominently identified with the General Secretary in direct negotiations with the companies. At the resumed negotiations on January 11th and 12th, respecting the claim for an all-round 5s., the committee decided, on a report by the negotiators, to accept the offered bonus of 1s. 6d. weekly for boys under 18 years of age, but not to accept the decision not to allow any further bonus to adults. The negotiators returned to their task, but owing to the attitude of the N.U.R. negotiators, who did not support the

Society's demand, the Society representatives were unable just then to get more for the adults. The Executive were satisfied that the negotiators had done their utmost, and accepted the position. It was therefore resolved that upon the new war bonus agreement being received by the General Secretary, it should be forwarded to the President, with authority to sign it. Mr. Bromley and Mr. Hunter therefore signed on June 17th in London.

Concurrent action had to be taken by the Society to secure the same concessions for the men on the Scottish lines and the London electric systems. There was trouble, too, on the G.N.R. over its Conciliation policy, for it accepted the general truce without accepting the general conditions, and a firm stand had to be taken to enforce them upon that Company, which has repeatedly caused separate trouble owing to its hostile policy towards union claims. A war levy was called for from members to enable the Society to deal generously with those members serving with the colours, for in three months over 1,368 members had joined up, and their contributions ceased from that time, their benefits also ceasing, except the Death and Orphan Fund benefits, until they resumed duty. By July of 1915, 1,702 members were serving with the forces, of whom seven had been killed and many wounded.

Despite this record, and the desire of many others to join up, it was necessary to send the following letter to the War Office in April of 1915 :—

“ Our members are jeered at and even molested in the streets by dockyard workers and soldiers, because they have not enlisted. I have no hesitation in asserting that our members are just as loyal to their country in the present crisis as any body of men there are, and I claim, on their behalf, that they are doing their duty with the least possible trouble to anyone. We have a large number of them already joined the Army ; we have a large number who would have joined if they had not been prevented from doing so by the instructions given from the War Office to the effect that locomotivemen must not be enlisted. The whole of our men feel it is not a right thing for them to have to submit



The present Head Office, 8, Park Square, Leeds, 1920.

to any indignity in the streets or elsewhere because they are not in the Army, when they are prevented from joining the Army, and a request has been made that I appeal to the War Office to supply them with buttons to wear in their coats, to indicate that they are doing their duty for their country. Buttons of this description are obtainable, I understand, from the War Office, and my object in writing this letter is to ask that some arrangement shall be made for supplying our drivers, firemen, and cleaners with these buttons, to prevent any trouble in the future."

The reply of the War Office, dated April 26th, was that the issue of buttons was restricted for the present to specially skilled workmen of recruitable age in the employ of British armament firms, whose services were indispensable for the execution of certain Government contracts.

Then, too, there was the difficulty of arranging for the satisfactory transfer of men from one district to another to meet war requirements. An appeal was made from Cudworth on behalf of members working short time, and the position was considered. It was decided, with a desire to assist the members, and at the same time to safeguard the funds from any great strain, to allow those losing one day per week 1s. ; two days per week, 3s. ; three days per week and over, 2s. per day ; half benefit to cleaner members ; only time lost less than six days to be considered for this resolution. In accordance with decisions of the 1912 and 1914 Conferences, a new Rule Book was being fashioned also during this difficult time, and alterations to premises at 8, Park Square, were being made to accommodate the growing staff. An invitation from the Morley Division Labour Party for Mr. Bromley to contest that division was extended and accepted, but cancelled a little later, owing to redistribution furnishing a good opening for Mr. Ben Turner, in whose favour Mr. Bromley withdrew. Mr. F. W. Coombes, of Exeter, who had served on the Executive, resigned early in 1915, being succeeded by Mr. C. Jarman, and in July, Mr. M. J. Dickenson, the veteran senior trustee, presented his resignation. It was decided to recommend that a suitable testimonial, in the form of an

illuminated address and £25, be given to Mr. Dickenson, in recognition of the long and extremely valuable services he had rendered the Society. This presentation was fittingly made, and Mr. G. Eason elected to the vacant trusteeship. There were seven candidates for the post of organiser in succession to Mr. Bromley, Messrs. A. Mason, of Openshaw, and Barton Wild, of Ardsley, having the two highest votes. A second ballot was taken between them in October, and it resulted: Mason, 6,471; Wild, 4,420.

These, surely, were affairs enough to mark 1915 as a busy year, but in the middle of it came a letter from the solicitors to the N.U.R., claiming that some statements made by Mr. Bromley at an open meeting at Newport were a libel upon Mr. J. F. Williams and Mr. J. H. Thomas, and asking Mr. Bromley to withdraw the same, or proceedings would be taken. The matter was placed in the hands of the Society's solicitors, by the Executive Committee, with the assertion that the statements were true in substance and in fact, and no withdrawal of them could take place by the General Secretary, who stated his readiness to accept proceedings.

By September of 1915 the rise in food prices was more than 37 per cent. above the level of July, 1914, and the Executive was compelled to again enter demands on the companies. Early in October, it was resolved to press forward for the full 5s. war bonus all round; for sixpence per day to count as a wages increase, and the remaining 2s. to be termed a war bonus. Piles of resolutions were pouring in from branches, many threatening a strike, and they had some effect on the companies. An agreement was arrived at in October that railwaymen whose standard rate was under 30s. were to receive an additional bonus of 3s., those whose rate was over 30s. a bonus of 2s., while boys under 18 were to receive another shilling. This advance was naturally appreciated, but the terms under which it was conceded were not. The agreement was to last as long as the Government controlled the railways, and subject to termination by one month's notice on either side. The Executive was not to put forward any new demands, nor to countenance new demands by branches, nor to support any strike promoted to further new

demands. The new and third award added 17 per cent. to the average pre-war earnings of railway workers, but the cost of living had increased by twice that percentage, so that we had the spectacle of the workers bearing all the sacrifice, while thousands of profiteers were assembling fortunes. During the winter of 1915-1916, and the early summer of 1916, prices continued to rise steeply, until in July the cost of living was 65 per cent. above the pre-war level, and the agreement of October, 1915, became simply intolerable to men of spirit. It could count for nothing in face of such facts, and a demand for a 10s. advance in wages, not war bonus, became imperative.

The membership of the Society had grown considerably, for during 1914 it had increased by 1,123, in spite of the fact that 1,400 had joined the colours, and the year closed with 32,900 members, and funds of £184,327. There were 11,998 members of the National Insurance Department, Approved Society No. 253. This was followed by the 1915 Report, showing that 2,219 men were serving, but still membership had increased, and stood at 33,624, six new branches having been opened. The income for the year was £43,230, a record, and the increase on the year, £12,630, with the total funds of £196,958 were both records. The "Journal" had materially changed in character, relating more to members and branches than to companies and big engines, the result being an increase of over 1,000 in its regular sale. That increase rapidly grew in subsequent years, until in 1921 the "Journal" enjoys a net sale of 28,000 copies per issue. The close of 1916 saw a membership of 34,039, with an addition to capital funds of £18,020 (over 10s. per member), the total funds reaching the remarkable figure of £214,987. There were then 2,678 members with the Army and Navy, all free from contributions, and it should be remembered, too, that the cost of everything required had vastly increased.

The Society was therefore in a formidable position when, in July and August of 1916, it again came to grips with truculent companies on behalf of members. On July 17th Mr. Bromley sent the following telegram to Mr. C. W. Bowerman, M.P. :—

" Members pressing for action to be taken at once to secure increased wages or bonus to meet increased cost of living. Please press Government for immediate meeting of T.U.C. deputation. My Executive in session."

This was followed on July 22nd by the following letter :—

DEAR MR. BOWERMAN,

My Executive, who are now sitting, have instructed me to write you asking what information you can give them for guidance, as, having seen the Press report of the interview granted by the Prime Minister to the sub-committee from the Trade Union Congress, which appears to them to be anything but satisfactory, and having regard to the special resolution passed at the Special Congress on June 30th, to the effect that if your efforts to obtain a reduction in the cost of living were unsuccessful, all trade unions were to put in a demand for increased wages, and having a number of applications from our branches that a demand be put in for an increased war bonus, or wages, for our members, my Executive would be glad to know what your view of the position is.

Yours fraternally,

J. BROMLEY.

There was further correspondence on the matter, as a resolution by the 1916 A.A.D. calling for such united action had been largely instrumental in causing the Special Congress, but it was essential to act, as prices rose 6 per cent. in August alone, and at all centres meetings of protest were being held. These culminated in threats to strike in September, and at last the companies moved. The Executive moved to London, and on September 13th the sub-committee met the General Managers' Committee, reporting an offer to advance the bonus on a differentiated basis, or an advance of 2s. flat rate, when it was resolved to use every endeavour to secure a flat rate, and to adhere to the demand for 10s. A further conference was held on September 14th, when the General Managers increased their offer to 3s. all round to those included in previous

agreements, with 1s. 6d. to boys under 18. If that was not acceptable they agreed to any arbitrator appointed by the Government. If that was not acceptable it was useless to continue the negotiations.

Resolved : " That in view of the difficult position which has arisen, this Executive desires to continue negotiations, and to settle the question of war bonus, without the calling of an arbitrator, and while we cannot think that the offer of 3s. now made by the companies is their final offer, we suggest, as a means of bringing us nearer together, that failing the granting of the full 10s., there shall be arranged, over and above any settlement arrived at being less than 10s., an automatic sliding scale, which in the event of food prices rising after the agreement being signed, and with a view to preventing the necessity of further meetings on this question, shall operate as follows :—1s. 3d. per week to men, and 8d. per week to boys, for every ten per cent. increase in the price of commodities."

The N.U.R. Executive broke off negotiations at this point to call a Special Conference, and the Associated Executive was next summoned to meet Mr. Runciman at the Board of Trade. He was accompanied by Sir Wm. Robertson and others, including Mr. A. Henderson, and the serious military danger of even a temporary railway strike was pointed out. The General Secretary promised to use every possible endeavour to prevent a strike, pending the completion of negotiations. Later the Managers were met again, but without result, and on September 19th the General Managers appealed for some counter offer to bridge the gulf between 10s. and 3s. They adjourned to the 20th, when the sub-committee stated that unless the sliding scale or the full 10s. were conceded, they would have to return to the full E.C. before agreeing to any settlement. The companies had advanced to 4s., and the Chairman said the sliding scale suggestion appealed to him, but as it was new it would require close consideration. For this purpose there was a retirement, after which the Managers offered 5s. additional bonus to adults and 2s. 6d. to boys, with a further conference to

discuss the sliding scale suggested. Sir Guy Granet (Chairman) gave to Mr. Bromley a letter guaranteeing that further Conference, and thus, after a strenuous, exhausting and most anxious time, a settlement was arrived at, Messrs. Hunter and Bromley being authorised to sign. On September 21st the electric lines were included in the general agreement. The increase dated from September 16th, and brought the total war increase to 10s. and 5s. respectively, aided by a further 5s. to men and 2s. 6d. to boys on April 9th of 1917, after a similar struggle.

Let us leave the cost of living problem at that point for a time to revert to a remarkably interesting debate on the question of Craft v. Industrial Unionism, at the Trade Union Congress in 1915. That debate ended in a decisive vote in favour of Craft Unionism, and sharp condemnation of the "Prussian" methods of large industrial organisations to those of the Crafts. Following upon that debate it was decided that the General Secretary get into touch with those Craft Unions which have members employed upon the railways, with a view to a conference being arranged for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the Parliamentary Committee to give effect to the resolution adopted at the Conference at Bristol. This was communicated to Mr. John Hill, Secretary of the Railway Organisation Committee of Craft Unions, to which the Society became affiliated. Reference to the Trade Union Congress reminds me that in the Bristol Congress in 1917, when all the workers were suffering from the continual increase in the cost of living, and the Congress was discussing the matter, Mr. Bromley moved a dramatic resolution that the Congress should stand adjourned at that point, that they should charter a special train, and proceed to London, and march to Downing Street to demand that the excessive profiteering should cease. This proposal struck the imagination of Congress, and it was carried with cheers, but never put into effect. Standing Orders Committee, of which Messrs. A. Bellamy and David Gilmour were members, furnished the pretext that Congress should continue its sitting, and Ministers felt very relieved.

Mr. Worthy Cooke was re-elected to the Committee with 1,278

votes, and Messrs. Barton Wild (North) and S. Garrison (Electric) were new members. Mr. R. Scott retired to become a locomotive foreman, and Mr. C. W. Shipley retired to become Sheriff of York City. It is of interest to note here how many members were taking part in public life. In 1919 the membership included nine Justices of the Peace ; sixty-one Town, City, and other Councillors ; sixteen Guardians of the Poor ; a dozen school managers and members of executive committees ; nine members of Pensions Committees ; eight members of Food and Local Control Committees ; four members of Profiteering Tribunals ; and members of most other local bodies, directors of Co-operative Societies, and so on.

Throughout the war period, but notably in 1915-1917, questions of unfair methods of releasing men for military service caused friction, and the Society had to strongly intervene to protect men with family responsibilities. The war, indeed, opened a flood tide of questions, and every day seemed to have its incidents.

CHAPTER XVII

Food Control—Compulsory Military Service—The Man Power Bill—N.U.R. and Craft Unions—A Libel Action—War Time Problems—Demand for Railway Nationalisation—The Sliding Scale—Death of the President—A Ministry of Labour.

MR. RUNCIMAN had announced the appointment of a Food Controller in November of 1915, and Lord Devonport was the first holder of that office. Meat, bread, and sugar came under strict control, and a voluntary system of rationing was launched, allowing 4 lbs. of bread or flour, $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of meat and $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. of sugar for each person weekly. On February 3rd of 1917 the Corn Production Act was introduced, and on April 4th the Government assumed complete control of all food stuffs. Lord Rhondda became Controller on June 15th, and by September maximum prices with splendid profit margins had been fixed. Sugar cards came into operation on January 1st, 1918, and after Lord Rhondda's death all householders had their coupon books to secure rations of meat, tea, lard, butter, or margarine. This scarcity of food and strict rationing caused great difficulty to locomotivemen. The inferior dark bread had no keeping qualities, and to buy food in strange towns was an awkward matter. Rationing, therefore, had to receive the special consideration of the Society, as real hardships were imposed upon the members. Stamina was reduced at a period of unexampled strain upon the railways. England was the storehouse of money and munitions for the Allies, and the railways



The Assistant Secretary's Room at Head Office.

were the vital channel. Yet drivers and firemen went hungry under rationing, and never were provided for in the way they ought to have been, although the Society got certain increases made for them.

Another phase of life in war-time which affected the entire community, and locomotivemen in particular, was military service. By November of 1915 we were getting to the last phase of voluntary recruiting, under which every man was expected to wear his khaki armlet, and there were house-to-house visits to rake men out. There were starred and unstarred men in industry, and late in 1915 we had the introduction of Conscription. Lord Derby's group system had closed on December 12th, and on January 5th of 1916 the Government introduced the Bill imposing compulsory service on single men, the Labour Party remaining in the Coalition by the decision of the Bristol Conference on January 28th, the day after Conscription had passed all its stages and come into operation. The great roll up of the youth of the nation had begun, and on May 2nd compulsion for all men of military age was introduced by Mr. Asquith, who had himself made the poetical speech about "Conscript me no married man nor widow's son." Under compulsory military service we had medical panels rapidly passing men, and local tribunals hearing many thousands of appeals against service. Conscientious Objectors were interned, and throughout 1916 and 1917 Military Service Acts tightened their grip until every man below 45 years of age was in contact with the barracks, and carried a wallet full of cards and forms.

Mr. Lloyd George became Prime Minister on December 7th of 1916, and a Man Power Bill was introduced to transfer men of all sorts anywhere for war production. Industrial conscription was plainly hinted at by Mr. Henderson, then a Cabinet Minister, and a world of Alec Gordon's, and similar secret agents, had arisen. All these facts had an intimate relation to the railways and our Society. By appeals and some amount of pressure, exemptions were secured for the General Secretary and the organisers of military age, and the Executive was constantly at work to protect the rank and file.

Organisers found a new duty in acting as advocates against military service on behalf of men in exceptional circumstances, and Mr. Mason, who had only started on March 1st of 1916, was claimed, but liberated by the military authorities. There was trouble on the G.N.R. over an award of Judge Parry in regard to the promotion of men, and on February 14th Messrs. Moore, Hunter and Wild met the representatives of the Board of Trade in London on this matter, which was eventually settled in a satisfactory manner. The Craft Union Conference had assumed considerable importance after the T.U.C. debate referred to, and the Executive resolved :—

“ That in future meetings of the Federation of Railway Craft Unions our representatives take every opportunity of upholding our claim, in conjunction with the claims of recognised craft unions, to have the absolute right to enrol as members the whole of the locomotivemen employed on the railways of the United Kingdom, and further, until the N.U.R. recognise our claim we make every effort possible to educate the representatives of the craft unions on our past efforts on behalf of those who are represented by our organisation from the period of its establishment.”

The N.U.R. so far abandoned its industrial unionism idea as to make an offer to the craft unions not to enrol in the N.U.R. in future those railway craftsmen who have served an apprenticeship or have worked at their trade for five years. In passing I wish to make particular reference to this all-grades policy, and to say how much I deplore what I regard as the thoughtless and mistaken reasoning of the younger school of National Guildsmen in this matter. There is abundant room for a big and embrasive National Union of Railwaymen, but it should not be an octopus seeking to rope in special and exceptional grades like :—

- 1.—Locomotive footplatemen.
- 2.—Clerical workers.
- 3.—Engineering craftsmen.

They have no ground of defence for poaching on those three

occupations, and the masses of verbiage produced by the N.U.R. in regard to those three grades amount only to excuses and to no sound reason. The A.S.R.S. was not more ridiculous in 1890 than was the N.U.R. in 1921, when it sought to run the cause of skilled engineers at Doncaster, some of whom were pleased to resort to fourpence halfpenny trade unionism, while their colleagues in the same shop were paying two and three shillings weekly to the A.E.U. There ought to be no talk of fusion or federation of forces of any kind until the N.U.R. has re-modelled itself on sounder lines, and has handed over the strictly craft members to the craft organisation. Then a very sound and most effective Federation would be constructed, and years of mutual sniping would be ended. I notice that at Rugby and Nuneaton, in March of 1917, Mr. Bromley went a long way towards a permanent basis, and although his suggestions were generous beyond the limit, there was no response from Mr. Thomas, and the silly pretence goes on that they speak for locomotivemen. A study of railway history has convinced me that the N.U.R. is on right lines except for the three grades mentioned, and those three it must surrender if it professes the interests of railwaymen and hopes for industrial control.

By 1917 there were 32 unions in the Railway Shops Organisation Committee, which had been formed in 1915, but a number of these unions are now in the A.E.U. It was at this period that Mr. Thomas saw fit to enter an action for libel against Mr. Bromley, and another against Mr. Moore, and to bring great unions into legal warfare in a period of war complexity. The action was heard before Mr. Justice Darling and a special jury on April 17th, and subsequent dates of 1917. Counsel engaged were Mr. J. F. P. Rawlinson, K.C., M.P., Sir Hugh Fraser, Mr. Edmund Browne, and Mr. J. Rowland Thomas, for the plaintiffs, and Mr. J. A. Compston, K.C., and Mr. R. A. Shepherd for the defendants. The action turned upon speeches by Mr. Bromley at Newport and Liverpool, for which Mr. Thomas demanded an apology and withdrawal. This Mr. Bromley declined to give, holding that the statements were true in substance and in fact. Reading over the mass of evidence and pleading now,

it looks about as important as the *Bardell v. Pickwick* breach of promise action, but it was all very expensive and harmful. The jury found that Messrs. Moore, Cooke, Gamble, and Bromley did conspire together to slander and libel Messrs. Thomas, Bellamy, Lowth, Hudson, and others, and they returned verdicts for damages in various amounts ranging from £150 to £25. Then, after the damages had been apportioned and costs discussed, Mr. Justice Darling remarked :—

“ My view with regard to damages, as Mr. Compston said, I think quite fairly, in his address to the jury, is that all this arose out of an attempt by the plaintiffs to smash the smaller union.”

The Executive decided to appeal against the verdict as to conspiracy, and the appeal was successful, the charge of conspiracy being disproved.

The Executive met in the following week, and gave Mr. Bromley a holiday from April 23rd to May 14th, as he was seriously run down by the strain of it all.

The Executive had scarcely got away from that long sitting in April of 1917, when they had to be recalled on the question of enlistment of railwaymen, and the scheme of substitution put forward by the Army Council and agreed to by the Railway Executive, who explained that the Army Council had demanded the release of 20 per cent. of the men under 41 years of age employed by the Railway Companies. After negotiation, this demand had been reduced to ten per cent. of the men under 31, irrespective of whether married or single, and that category “ A ” men should be released before category “ B ” men, and in order to fall in with the demands of the Army Council, the companies proposed to cancel the previous scheme of release and to substitute the following :—

- 1.—The youngest unmarried men, under the age of 31, and fit for foreign service, to go first.
- 2.—If there are no single men under the age of 31 available, the married men under the age of 31, with the fewest children under 14, to be selected.

- 3.—After all single and married men under 31 have been exhausted, the youngest single men between the ages of 31 and 41, and fit for foreign service, should be released, and afterwards the married men between the ages of 31 and 41 with the fewest children.

To facilitate the release of Class "A" men, those of military Classes "B" and "C," or other employees unfitted for military service, may be transferred from one station to another, to act as substitutes for Class "A" men.

This would have enabled the companies to release many Class "A" men from the engines, and to substitute for them Classes "B" and "C" men from any other grade. The Executive therefore objected, and immediately got into touch with the Railway Executive. On May 4th of 1917 the Railway Executive Committee replied that :—

" You may rest assured that no men who are not employed in the Locomotive Department will be put on as enginemmen or firemen on railway engines, and the contention that any such departure in locomotive work would be taken as a direct violation of the railway truce is not therefore understood."

This was a very important assurance from the Railway Executive, for it affected not only the going but the returning of footplatemen, and it furnished a striking little example of the importance of direct and exclusive representation of locomotive workers.

Messrs. W. W. Cooke (Vice-President) and Barton Wild had been in Ireland, negotiating a war bonus for Irish locomotivemen, and had been able to sign an agreement for an increase of war bonus by the following amounts :—

Employees, 18 years of age and upwards, 5s. additional ; employees under 18 years, except boys engaged since January 1st, 1915, at rates of pay which exceed 6s. or more. the rates usually paid to boys occupying similar positions, 2s. weekly. One-sixth of this bonus was to be added to the rates of pay for Sunday duty.

Some very unfair methods were adopted by the

companies for releasing men for the Army, and the Society had to intervene continuously to preserve fair play in that respect. Methods of compulsion had been adopted to get men into the Railway Operating Division, and several managers had to be interviewed to get the process reversed. There was Conciliation Board discussion, made more difficult by a rather "dog in the manger" attitude of the N.U.R. There was the ever-rising cost of living, on which the Society led the way in a demand for efforts at reduction and restraint by the Cabinet. There was the 1916 discussion of the National Programme, and the request of the Executive that members, branches, delegates, and Conciliation Board officials should concentrate upon the eight hour day, with 7s. minimum per day for enginemen and motormen, 4s. 6d. for firemen, and 3s. 6d. for cleaners.

There were air raids and alarms by night, with stations and trains in gross darkness, and the Easter riots of 1916 in Dublin, when grants had to be made to our members there for losses involved. These, and other problems concerning overwork and a high death rate, and continual losses in battle, had to be dealt with. The Society was entering its busiest and greatest era. Compensation had to be secured for members injured in munition works explosions, ghastly tragedies never reported because of D.O.R.A. In 1916 Mr. Wixson resigned from the Executive, just when members were re-electing him, and the seat had to be declared vacant. Mr. W. Gamble for the Midland District, Mr. J. Healey for the North Midland, and Mr. J. Hunter for Lancashire, were re-elected. Mr. W. J. R. Squance, of Llanelly, was elected to succeed Mr. Wixson.

The new Executive decided in 1917 to nominate Mr. John Bromley for the Executive of the Labour Party, a post to which he was elected by the Scarborough Conference in 1920. It also decided to table the following resolutions, which are significant of the new spirit of trade unionism :—

- 1.—To press for the Nationalisation of Railways, and to obtain by legislation complete control of the railways for the people,

as having regard to the admitted success of public control of railways, this Conference again expresses the belief that railway nationalisation would be most advantageous to the community. Further, we consider that the appointment of an Advisory Committee (partly composed of representatives from the employees) and a Minister of Railways responsible to Parliament, is necessary to ensure the success of the undertaking, and to guarantee that the interests of the community and railway employees will be adequately protected.

Moreover, in view of the fact that the present Industrial Truce is responsible for withholding from railwaymen generally higher wages and better conditions of service, we consider it essential in the public interest that the future cost of their improved conditions shall be calculated, and the amount thereof deducted from the purchase price of railways, should the transfer of railways from private to national ownership become an accomplished fact.

- 2.—To give effect to the foregoing resolution, a Committee of three representatives from the Labour Party E.C., with three representatives (one each from the A.S.L.E. & F., the Railway Clerks, and the N.U.R.), be appointed, with six representatives from the Railway Nationalisation Society, to consider and draft the necessary procedure to be taken to retain the railways under the control of the Government at the end of the war, and to formulate a scheme to bring about complete Nationalisation and State ownership of the railways, to be worked in the interests of the whole of the people, instead of private monopoly.

These resolutions proved to be the forerunner, not only of an important debate, but of an important change of policy in regard to railway administration. The Ministry of Transport is now in being, and the history of the change will go on after this book is out. Partial railway control has already come and is dealt with later, but full democratic railway control is undoubtedly coming.

Correspondence was re-opened in 1916 on the sliding scale question, and as the General Managers remained indifferent, a telegram was sent to Sir Guy Granet which expedited matters. An early meeting was promised and arranged, and Mr. Potter wrote on October 26th, arranging to meet a sub-committee on Thursday, November 2nd. Messrs. Hunter, Wride, Stevenson, Oxlade, Wild, and the General Secretary were appointed the sub-committee for the purpose.

Mr. John Hunter, President of the Society, had signed the award of September, 1916, but his strength had been severely tried by the ordeal of negotiations. He went to London as a member of the sub-committee just mentioned, but was taken ill there on November 3rd, and returned home to Southport on November 4th. On the 6th he was removed to a nursing home suffering from plural pneumonia, and he died on November 21st. He virtually died in harness, leaving the Society when it specially needed the advice and genial optimism which he possessed. The funeral on November 26th was attended by Mr. Geo. Moore (in the unavoidable absence of the General Secretary), Mr. W. W. Cooke for the Executive, Mr. I. Gregory for the organisers, Mr. J. C. Branson for the L. & Y. Delegation Board, and Mr. R. Scott, formerly of the Executive, who travelled from Ayr to attend the last rites of an esteemed colleague. There were members from many branches, and from N.U.R. branches too. At the graveside Mr. Moore delivered an address of tribute to a departed friend, one who was an example of worth and work to all. A very large number of wreaths from all parts of the country testified to the widespread sympathy with Mrs. Hunter and her family in their loss. They included beautiful wreaths from Mr. and Mrs. Bromley, from the Executive Council, from the L. & Y. Delegation Board, and from many branches. John Hunter was a native of Edinburgh, coming with his parents to Lancashire as a child. He had joined the A.S.L.E. & F. in 1898, transferring from the A.S.R.S., became Southport Branch Secretary 1901 to 1904, and was a Conciliation Board leader 1907 to 1916. In 1910 he became Chairman of the L. & Y. Loco. Delegation Board, and was elected

to the E.C. of the Society in the same year. In 1914 he was elected President, and continued in office to the end of a life devoted to his colleagues. A Memorial Fund, for which Mr. Moore acted as secretary, raised over £350 very soon. Some of this was invested with the Society at 4 per cent., Mrs. Hunter receiving £1 per week.

Mr. Geo. Wride was elected President for the year 1917, with Mr. Worthy Cooke as Vice-President, and Mr. Cooke took the place of Mr. Hunter on the Negotiating Sub-Committee, destined to bear all the storm of the next three vital years. On December 5th of 1916 the General Secretary had written to Mr. Thomas :—

I have to-day received a letter in which Mr. Potter says the General Managers of Railways are not prepared to recommend the matter (the suggested sliding scale). I shall be pleased to know what are your opinions of the position before pursuing the matter any further.

Permit me to congratulate you on your election to the position of General Secretary of your organisation.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN BROMLEY.

No reply having been received, Mr. Bromley wired on January 1st, 1917 :—

“ My Executive desire to press the question of sliding scale, and will be pleased to know the decision of your Executive, with a view to joint action in the matter, as decided at our meeting November 3rd, when joint demand was agreed upon.”

In reply Mr. Thomas promised to lay that telegram before his Committee “ at their meeting in March next.”

On January 2nd Mr. Bromley wrote again : “ My Committee expressed their regret that your telegram conveys the impression that the question of the sliding scale may be deferred until your Executive Meeting in March. We are of opinion this should be dealt with at once, and we request that the N.U.R. Sub-Committee should be called to deal with it.”

Attention was given to a tabulation of all departures from pre-war conditions, and concurrently with it the claim for an automatic sliding scale was advanced a step. Nothing was heard from Unity House between January 5th and March 14th, when Mr. Thomas wrote: "This matter was discussed by my Executive at their last meeting, and I was instructed to inform you that as the proposals for a sliding scale had been rejected by the railway companies, they had decided to make other proposals to meet the situation."

The objection of the companies was that a guaranteed sliding scale would be too expensive, and an example for other workers to follow. It has been mistakenly criticised and deprecated since by some people, but it was an advance that took much winning, and the Society led the way all the time to the victory.

A Ministry of Labour had been established, and it asked for the co-operation of the Society in making it successful and effective in preventing disputes during the national crisis. The Executive appreciated the appointment of a Ministry of Labour, but regretted its very limited powers, and demanded that the Labour Party in Parliament and the Trade Union Congress should press to make the Office a real one. The first letter to the Ministry from the Society referred to the serious difficulty experienced by men sent away unexpectedly, and unable to obtain food owing to early shop closing and rationing. The Labour Ministry replied that it was a matter for the Railway Executive, and that Committee replied that it was not a matter for them!

The Society was next appealed to for assistance in the release of drivers for military service, and the Committee resolved that the difficulty might be overcome by returning to the R.O.D. those locomotivemen engaged on other military duties, and by the institution of a volunteer civilian railway service in France, which would receive the support of the locomotivemen of the United Kingdom.

I think we are now ready to face the big issues of 1917.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Year 1917—Growth of Activity—A Memorable Conference—Compulsory Enlistment—A National Crisis—Special Conference Summoned—Sir A. Stanley's Pledge—Its Redemption Secured—The Eight Hours Day—A Triumph for the Society.

THE year 1917 is only comparable to the year 1919 in the history of the Society. It was a year of great accomplishment, and of pathfinding for the whole movement of organised labour. Every day had its keen interest, and every month had its record full of importance. At the close of 1916 there were 2,678 members with the forces, and paying no contributions, but still the year had passed all previous financial records, and membership had risen to 34,039, with six new branches opened. The income during 1916 was £45,114, out of which £18,020 (again over 10s. per member) was added to capital funds, giving a total of £214,978, which, divided by membership, was the highest figure on record for any society in the world. The Thirty-seventh Annual Report, covering 1917, and issued in May of 1918, showed total funds of £230,428, a gain on the year of £15,449, exceptionally fine in view of the fact that every requisite was at double prices. There were 3,014 members on active service at the close of 1917, out of a total of 36,704, or nearly ten per cent. of the Society. The increase of members during the year was 2,665, with nine new branches opened. The value per member was £6 7s. 2d., in spite of the rapid growth of figures, and few societies could touch such a proportion. The regular "Journal "

sales increased by over 2,000 copies, and all round there were signs of a great awakening. If the object of issuing a writ for libel had been damage to the Society, it signally missed its aim, for the case of 1917 proved an impetus to a movement that has continued ever since.

Trade Union activities were very great, including the eight hour movement, and the laying of the case for locomotive workers before the Committee on Production. That ably presented case was the means of increasing the war wage by 6s. weekly to men over 18, and 3s. to those under 18. Taken generally, the year was one without precedent in the history of the Society, making a great advance in its prestige and strength. Taking first a casual view of the year, we find war expenditure gradually rising from five millions per day to six millions, and later to seven. The cost of living on February 1st of 1917 was 89 per cent. higher than in 1914, and by July 1st it was 109 per cent. higher. The American Congress had passed an Eight Hours Act for railwaymen. The Russian Revolution, in February, was followed by the entry of America into the War against the Central Powers. Before the year had ended our members were driving many train loads of American troops across the country to take their places in France.

The N.U.R. had brought along a new and distinctly selfish Conciliation Scheme, an attempt to monopolise all Boards by their nominees, a very disappointing departure from what is supposed to be trade union loyalty and comradeship. We did not allow the attempt to succeed, but that does not alter the fact of the attempt being made. Many of our branches were sustaining sad war losses, and all were grieved to learn that on April 9th Mr. Geo. Moore's younger son Clifford, a lieutenant of the Seaforth Highlanders, aged 20 years, was killed in the great advance movement. There was grief in the news of every day, and grief in the effects of a terrible "influenza" scourge, which spread like a plague and killed more people in its passing than did five years of awful war. Truly "The Last Post" was sounding in every town, and there was much depression. When the A.A.D. assembled in

May, with Coun. D. S. Humphreys, of Mexborough, in the chair, and Mr. R. T. Mackereth, of York, in the vice-chair, it was fitting that all delegates should rise in silence as a tribute of sorrow for all the fallen and sympathy with those who mourned. That Conference had the pleasure of being welcomed by Mr. Moore as President of the Leeds Trades and Labour Council, and, also, it had the pleasure of making history, as will be shown soon, by its series of resolutions and what followed them.

The A.A.D. was memorable for another reason, too. Mr. Bromley, in his annual report as General Secretary, had referred to the libel action brought against him and others by Mr. Thomas and others, and after reporting the circumstances, he said :—

“ I therefore beg to tender to you my resignation of my office, and leave the matter in your hands. While my conscience is perfectly clear, the fact remains that you, on behalf of the Society, will have to put sentiment aside and view the position from the standpoint of the interest and welfare of your Society.”

The report, and especially this passage, evoked a serious and high-toned discussion, at the close of which it was resolved, by 49 votes to three :—

“ That this Conference accept our General Secretary’s explanation, and that we do not accept Mr. Bromley’s resignation, but wish to place on record our appreciation of his services.”

That was possibly the finest of many important decisions of the Conference, for it was a splendid manifestation of loyalty to the chief official in a very trying episode. To conclude a brief summary of the year before dilating upon its chief events in the Society history, it was in 1917 that the Seamen’s Union refused to carry Messrs. Macdonald and Jowett to Russia; that Mr. H. A. L. Fisher’s Education Bill was introduced; and that Mr. Henderson was kept waiting “ on the mat ” by the Prime Minister. The Fisher Education Act, considerably revised, became law in 1918. Mr. Bromley was elected to the Executive of the Railway Nationalisation Society on June 7th of 1917.

Prolonged sittings of the Executive began on the close of the Conference, and it was first decided to ask for an interview with the Railway Executive, or General Managers' Committee, to discuss the following points :—

- 1.—The immediate application of Clause 72 (of the 1914 Conciliation Scheme) to our locomotive members.
- 2.—National Programme on behalf of locomotivemen.
- 3.—Establishment of machinery free from other grades for maintenance of locomotivemen's conditions of service.

Messrs. Oxlade and Stevenson were the drafting committee in relation to No. 3, and Messrs. Wild, Stevenson, Healey, Wride and Branson were the sub-committee to fix up the draft of such machinery, the other Executive members to devote attention to the National Programme. This was compiled and adopted, placing the eight hour day in the forefront, and presenting a daily wage scale which is exceeded in the Conditions of Service now operating.

Mr. Mackereth, of York, wired to secure an interview with the Executive in June, respecting Fireman Brown, a new member, against whom the military authorities were taking legal proceedings for refusing to submit to medical examination. This was contrary to the arrangement made with the Railway Executive on May 25th, and Sir A. Kaye Butterworth was wired to that effect. Brown was defended and a shorthand note taken of the proceedings, which were dealt with by the sub-committee meeting the managers on June 9th. Other important cases of practically compulsory enlistment arising at the same time were Fireman Yemm, of Ardsley, and Fireman Hutton, of Birkenhead. At the same time the War Office wrote asking to vary the agreement entered into with the General Secretary on March 22nd, 1917, as conditions had changed and many more railwaymen were required for service. On this and other urgent subjects the Railway Executive did not wish to meet the A.S.L.E. & F. alone, but it had to concede that point, and a sub-committee of five were appointed: Messrs. Oxlade, Stevenson, Wild, Cooke, and Wride, with the General Secretary,

to negotiate re military matters, truce arrangements, National Programme, and new machinery. The Craft Union Committee was awakening to the need for similar action, and there was preparation for a substantial forward movement.

The Negotiating Committee had met the Railway Executive on July 24th, and in the next two days visited the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Labour. In each case the great seriousness of the situation was pointed out, because the members were solid against compromise. Next, the chairman of the Railway Executive was again interviewed, and he suggested an increase of wages for the war period, but not the eight hours day. Both he and the Board of Trade were told the Committee would remain in London until a settlement was reached. At a meeting between the Railway Executive and the Society's representatives on August 1st, the eight hour day was fully debated, but the Railway Executive expressed itself unable to agree. Again they offered to consider an arrangement for increased wages in place of the existing bonus, as Sir Herbert Walker had suggested, but this was not acceptable, and the Conference terminated, as the Railway Executive said an insistence on the eight hours day would become a subject for other Government departments. The General Secretary therefore visited the Board of Trade on the same day, and as a result met Sir Albert Stanley, the President, on August 2nd. Communication remained continuous until August 9th, when the sub-committee twice visited the Board of Trade, and told Sir Albert Stanley of the serious danger of any failure to reach agreement.

Finally Sir Albert Stanley, having consulted the War Cabinet, made the following statement on behalf of the Government :—

“ That the Government could not under the circumstances consider the principles of the eight hour day at present, inasmuch as this was not a question arising out of the war, and was generally recognised as unworkable under existing conditions. The present system of railway control would, however, continue for some time after the war, so that there was an opportunity of raising and dealing with the question of hours after the conclusion of peace.

In the meantime, machinery exists for dealing with any question of excessive hours or insufficient remuneration arising out of war conditions."

So far, this was an important statement. It meant that the Board of Trade would assist the Society in preventing excessive hours, and gave the Executive power to again approach the Railway Executive for increased remuneration, despite the fact that the Government had turned the War Bonus into War Wages, without asking the Society. The Government, however, had refused to institute the eight hour day during the war, and in view of the resolutions passed by the A.A.D. in May, the Executive felt it had no alternative but to summon the delegates to London, to give instructions as to the next step. The resolutions referred to, adopted at Leeds in May, were :—

- 1.—Instructing the Executive to immediately open up negotiations with the Railway Executive, and demand that the full advantage of Clause 72 be immediately given to locomotivemen, electric motormen, and electric trainmen, and also that machinery be put in operation whereby our National Programme may be presented and obtained without delay. We further instruct the Executive that under no circumstances will we be bound by any agreement or machinery that takes away from the locomotivemen the right to manage their own affairs.
- 2.—That this Conference . . . give our Executive Committee the same powers they have exercised in the past, relying on them when the necessary assistance or pressure is required, to call upon us, or to refer the matters in dispute back to the members for their acceptance or otherwise. This last clause is to be adhered to should any compromise be suggested on the question of the eight hour day.

This assistance was now called for. The Government had never taken a really serious view of the matter until August 15th, relying until then on the Press misrepresentation of the claim as being

Aug 21st/1917

Dear Mr. Stanley,

In accordance with what

I said to you last night with respect to the demand of your men for an hour day I am writing to enquire what you have stated to your Executive Committee, to you I believe when I attended a meeting on Wednesday last and also in the House of Commons, namely, that I pledge the Government, that the Cabinet & myself personally to extreme the present extent of the Railway for a time off the execution of liabilities so that there would be an opportunity afforded within one month, to bring forward a report of a strike working day which the Railway were under control and that any reasonable request for a strike working day would have

been a moderate & sympathetic consideration of the Government. I have also said that although including strikers for dealing with any question of special law or insufficient remuneration among out of war conditions on this latter point I stated in my speech to the Legislature that any thing possible would be done by the Railway Executive Committee to reduce the long hours to the lowest possible minimum consistent with the absolute demands which are put upon the Railways. I have also stated that in a few days I am aware my demand which is to the present has been made for increased remuneration among out of war conditions has been somewhat exaggerated & I had no reason to think that any future

future demands would be dealt with in the same spirit; I will use my good office with the Railway Executive Committee to move that they will see the men's representatives & persons attending with it to be satisfied aimed - this with I think

Yours faithfully
W. Stanley

one to enforce the eight hour day then, in the crisis year of the war. That it was not, but it was a claim to get a definite promise and guarantee, and the Government was for evading that guarantee as far as possible. Sir Albert Stanley had made a statement on the matter in the House of Commons on August 15th, in the course of which he said :—

“ In October, 1914, in view of the war, the representatives of the railway companies, the National Union of Railwaymen, and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, entered into an agreement which was generally known as ‘ The Truce.’ They resolved that notwithstanding the notice of determination, which expired on November 30th, 1914, the scheme of conciliation settled at the Board of Trade Conference on November 11th, 1911, should remain in force, and that the men’s side of the Board on each of the railways, as then constituted, should continue to act, provided that either of the parties to the agreement might give six weeks’ notice to terminate it, and thereupon the parties should agree as to the arrangement to be adopted for the future. It was further agreed that all existing contracts and conditions of service should remain in operation, and that no new agreement should be made by the companies, either with deputations or Conciliation Boards, during this suspensory period. This truce has been, by subsequent negotiations between the companies and the unions, confirmed and strengthened. The agreement had been duly observed, but the increase in the cost of living during the war had rendered it necessary that an improvement in the men’s wages should take place. The present war bonus was 15s. per week to men over 18 years of age, and a lower amount to women and boys, the total cost being about £22,000,000 per annum. Quite recently, both the trade unions concerned made fresh proposals to the railway companies. The companies agreed with the National Union of Railwaymen that the war bonus should be converted into a war wage, the effect of which was to increase payments for overtime and Sunday duty at an additional cost of £3,000,000 a year. A like offer was made to the Associated

Society, but the representatives stated they were unable to enter into negotiations on the question of wage or bonus, unless the principle of an eight hour day was first conceded. He had the highest appreciation of the loyalty and zeal of all classes of railwaymen during the war, and knew that they had ungrudgingly worked very long hours, which he wished could be reduced, but it was not denied that it was absolutely impossible under existing war conditions to give any practical effect to an eight hour day.

"It was, therefore, clear to him that the object of the Society was to obtain recognition of the principle of an eight hour day at a time when, owing to the national emergency and the Government control of railways, they considered they had a favourable opportunity for dealing with the matter. He could not believe that, in view of the facts stated, any responsible organisation of railwaymen, who had hitherto played such a splendid part in assisting the nation in its emergency, would jeopardise the prosecution of the war by authorising or taking part in a stoppage at this critical time. He wished to intimate, on behalf of the Government, that the necessary steps were being taken to deal with any emergency that might arise."

The Special Conference assembled at 9 a.m. on Thursday, August 16th, at the Grafton Hotel. It continued its deliberations over Thursday, Friday and Saturday. On Friday, August 17th, a decision to strike was arrived at, and that evening Mr. Bromley had an important interview with the President of the Board of Trade. Ministers were anxious to have the matter concluded before Parliament adjourned for the grouse moors, and the Press awakened to the vital work of locomotive workers as the centre of the whole railway system. The N.U.R. was quite piqued about it, and advised its branch members, who were watching the drama with keen interest, to wait for the advice of their own Executive, and to take no part in the present movement. The Society had a just cause and absolute unity, and not in all its previous history had there been a finer demonstration of its strength. While the Government

was hastily arranging for a railway service, the Society was perfecting a system for passing communications to all branches independent of telegraph or post. There was talk of the arrest of foolish leaders, and shorthand reporters from Scotland Yard had to be ordered out of the Conference. On Saturday, August 18th, a Proclamation was made by the Government, applying Part I. of the Munitions Act (1915) to the dispute. The object of this was to cause the Society or the Railway Executive to report the difference to the Ministry of Labour for settlement by conciliation or arbitration. The Proclamation also prohibited any stoppage of work, and made it illegal to apply any of the Union funds for purposes of strike pay. On the same day Sir Albert Stanley and Mr. Geo. Barnes addressed the Conference at Drovers' Hall, Islington, but without inducing it to change its mind. Conference authorised the Executive to negotiate further, and a final settlement was reached with the President of the Board of Trade at midnight on August 21st.

The written pledge of Sir Albert Stanley to the A.S.L.E. & F. brought the eight hour day ten years nearer for the whole trade union movement. The autograph message was as follows :—

August 21st, 1917.

DEAR MR. BROMLEY,

In accordance with what I said to you last night with respect to the demand of your men for an eight hour day, I am writing to confirm what I have stated to your Executive Committee and to your delegates when I attended a meeting on Saturday last, and also in the House of Commons, namely : **That I pledge the Government, the War Cabinet, and myself personally, to continue the present control of the railways for a time after the cessation of hostilities, so that there would be an opportunity afforded within one month to bring forward a request for a shorter working day while the railways were under control, and that any reasonable request for a short working day would have the immediate and sympathetic consideration of the Government**

I have also said that adequate machinery existed for dealing with any question of excessive hours or insufficient remuneration arising out of war conditions. On these two latter points I stated in my speech to the delegates that everything possible would be done by the Railway Executive Committee to reduce the long hours to the lowest possible minimum consistent with the absolute demands which are put upon the railways.

I have also stated that, insofar as I am aware, any demands which up to the present have been made for increased remuneration arising out of war conditions had been amicably adjusted, and I have no reason to doubt that any future demands would be dealt with in the same spirit.

I will use my good offices with the Railway Executive Committee to secure that they will see the men's representatives and discuss outstanding matters at the earliest moment, this week if possible.

Yours faithfully,

A. H. STANLEY.

This letter was a very broad hint of a concession of the eight hour day to be brought into effect at the cessation of hostilities, and as such it was wisely accepted by the Executive as a settlement of the crisis. Mr. Geo. Barnes, M.P., as a member of the War Cabinet, supported this view by his assurance:—"I convey to you the sympathy of the War Cabinet in what they regard as a perfectly justifiable demand under normal conditions and in normal times, and also the sympathy, as I know, of every member of the War Cabinet; and in the second place to assure you that all that Sir Albert Stanley has said will be carried into effect, literally and without qualifications, after the cessation of hostilities."

Let us continue this interesting story of the eight hour movement to its conclusion. The fourth and last Armistice, that with Germany, was signed on November 11th, 1918, and next day, November 12th, Mr. Bromley wrote to Sir Albert Stanley, demanding that the pledges of 1917 should be redeemed. There was

some excusable delay, and eventually Sir A. Stanley met the representatives of the Society on Tuesday, November 26th, at 3.30 p.m. In the discussion Sir Albert Stanley said "there is no difference between us as to the pledge that was given by me in August, 1917," and he concluded, "I think we should take a survey of the position in the country, and the appointment of a Commission or Council to take this matter up, both in respect to bonus and wages, of various grades, and if this were done at once I feel sure something would be done quickly for the men on the railways. This is what I have to offer you this afternoon." The E.C. contested this and demanded the redemption of the pledges given in August, 1917. Finally it was agreed that Mr. W. W. Cooke and Mr. Bromley, with Sir F. Marwood for the Board of Trade, should agree upon the hours worked by the various companies as their standard, and Sir A. Stanley agreed to lay these before the War Cabinet, and to let the Executive have a reply by Friday. On November 28th came the following telegram :—

"War Cabinet considered your Society's demand this morning, and have adjourned discussion until early next week. Note was taken of the pledges given in August, 1917. Meeting fixed for to-morrow now postponed until early next week.

MARWOOD."

There was more wiring, and the general election was approaching. On December 2nd this telegram came :—

"Hope it will be possible for you to arrange to postpone further meeting until first week after election, December 14th. Am leaving for Ashton to-day. Please communicate with me at Midland Hotel, Manchester.

STANLEY."

So to Manchester Mr. Bromley wired :—

"My Executive in session unable to accept conditions of your telegram of December 2nd, and are prepared to come to Manchester immediately. Delay impossible. Please wire reply.

BROMLEY."

So by the passage of more telegrams an appointment was made at Manchester, where, at the Midland Hotel, an offer was made to accept a date to be mutually agreed upon for the acceptance of the eight hour day. He promised to lay that before the War Cabinet, and the Executive offered to meet him anywhere in the United Kingdom on the matter. At 12.45 p.m. on Thursday, December 5th, a telephonic communication was received from Sir A. Stanley, requesting the E.C. to meet him. They caught the 1.15 ex Leeds to London, and met Sir A. Stanley at the Board of Trade the same evening. Mr. Bromley, be it remembered, was all this time trying to conduct his Parliamentary contest in North East Leeds, having given up Morley to Mr. Ben Turner. Owing to engagements in Leeds, Mr. Bromley could not accompany the Committee to London until Friday, and Sir Albert Stanley specially asked Mr. Bromley, in a personal talk over the telephone, to follow on and to join the Executive in the final discussion. This Mr. Bromley did, travelling in the night, and he was thus able to render the last assistance needed to secure that boon to all railwaymen—the eight hour day. The E.C. of the N.U.R. was waiting at that deferred meeting, but the Committee of the Society rightly demanded that as they alone had secured the pledge, and had prosecuted that tiring quest, Sir Albert Stanley should now meet them alone. This was agreed, and the President of the Board of Trade suggested March 1st, owing to the impossibility of working the eight hour day at once. The Committee suggested January 1st, and eventually February 1st was agreed upon.

Following is the text of the agreement, and owing to the compulsory departure of Mr. Bromley for Leeds, it will be noticed that Mr. Worthy Cooke, President in 1918, had the honour of signing for the Society the first Eight Hour Agreement for the British Railway Service :—

COPY OF AGREEMENT.

- 1.—The principle of an eight hour day for all members of the wages staff has been conceded, and is to come into operation on February 1st.

- 2.—All existing conditions of service to remain unaltered pending the decision of a Committee to be set up as soon as possible to review wages and other conditions of service of railwaymen in Great Britain.

(Signed) ERNEST J. MOGGRIDGE.

Board of Trade, S.W.,

6th December, 1918.

On behalf of the Associated Society of
Locomotive Engineers and Firemen,

W. W. COOKE, President.

6th December, 1918.

Thus a gratifying victory was won after a long and trying effort. By such struggles are the rights of men secured. The effects of the agreement were to reduce working hours by 18 hours weekly on the Caledonian and Great North of Scotland; by 24 hours weekly on the Highland, and by varying amounts on the different English and Welsh lines. The contest reduced the hours of all railway workers, for as the Society delegates walked out with their documents, the N.U.R. walked in. That was how point one of the points of the National Programme was won. Now let us see how others were won.

CHAPTER XIX

1917 Conciliation Scheme—The National Programme—The Committee on Production—Another Advance—The Stream of War Traffic—Tributes to Railway Workers—Women as Engine Cleaners—The Gretna Disaster—Presentation to Mr. Wride—District Councils—The Comb Out—Luxury Spending—Extra Food Allowance.

THERE is little need for me to deal with the 1914 Railway Conciliation Scheme, as agreed upon before the war, and allowed to remain in abeyance by a mutual agreement dated October 1st, 1914, following the outbreak of the war. The agreement was reached at a meeting between the General Managers' Committee, the A.S.L.E. & F. and the N.U.R., and it provided, as I have already indicated, that the Conciliation Scheme dated December 11th, 1911, should remain in force, and that the men's side on each of the several railways as then constituted should continue to act, provided that any of the three parties might give six weeks' notice to determine the agreement. It was further agreed that all existing contracts and conditions of service should remain in operation, and that no new agreements should be made during the suspensory period. The scheme, therefore, which was printed, and was to have become operative on December 1st, 1914, remained in suspense, and we come to the resumption of the story of that remarkable year 1917 before we find a further attempt on the part of the Society to establish new machinery for presenting the claims of its members to the employers.

To come directly to its provisions as applicable to enginemen, firemen, cleaners, and electric trainmen, it provided for national proposals affecting wages and hours of labour to be submitted to the companies by the E.C. of the A.S.L.E. & F., through the General Secretary. In the event of the reply not being satisfactory, representatives were appointed to meet the representatives of the Railway Companies to negotiate. The procedure in summary was as follows :—

- 1.—There shall be established on each railway a Delegation Board to deal with rates of wages, hours of labour, or conditions of service, **including matters of discipline and management.** (A distinct advance on the 1911 Scheme.)
- 2.—In regard to other than national settlements, the Delegation Board shall be the medium, and all cases must be forwarded in writing.
- 3.—If the employees wish to bring before the notice of the company a matter affecting the contractual relations between the company and their employees, a Delegation Board Conference shall be held. If the majority of delegates at the Conference approve of the matter, it shall be sent to the company's officials by the Secretary of the Delegation Board, with a request to receive a deputation within fourteen days, and it may next be referred to the Board of Directors, and if satisfaction is not reached, it is referred to the Executive Committee.
- 4.—Matters not requiring a National Agreement, and not being detrimental to, or interpretations of, the National Agreements, may in the first place be dealt with by the Delegate Board, and if satisfaction is not reached, may be referred to the Executive Committee.

Matters such as discipline and management, including punishment, may be dealt with by the Delegation Board, or employees may avail themselves of the provisions of Clause 72, as agreed upon by the Railway Companies in 1916, as follows :—

72. OFFENCES AGAINST DISCIPLINE, ETC.

"Men charged with misconduct, neglect of duty, or other breaches of discipline, shall be permitted to state their defence, to call witnesses, and to advance any extenuating circumstances before their officers prior to a final decision being arrived at. Where doubts arise, or where serious results to men are likely to follow, the case should, we think, be placed before the higher officials of the company."

If after such investigation an employee is found guilty, he has the right of appeal to a superior officer for re-consideration, the appeal to be made in writing. On a personal interview he may be accompanied by a fellow-workman, or by an official of his trade union. Matters of discipline, management, punishments, etc., not disposed of by such procedure, may be referred to the General Secretary and Executive Committee.

Clause 8 of the Scheme lays down the procedure for the selection of delegates to the Delegate Board, four from each district on the system, and the election being conducted by the Board of Trade. The scheme was to remain in operation for twelve months, and thereafter be subject to revision or termination on three months' notice being given by either side, a general election of each Delegation Board to take place at least once in every three years. The provisions for a Secretary of each side and for leading members followed broadly the scheme of 1911. Clause 21 provided for each employee to receive a printed booklet form of his rate of wages, hours and conditions, and a periodical print of all conditions. Clause 22 provided for all decisions, settlements and agreements to be posted at all depots, signed by the Chairman and Secretary of each side.

It would be convenient also to state here the National Programme decided upon by the A.A.D. of 1917 for locomotivemen and electric trainmen :—

Hours : 8 hours per day ; Sunday duty to be paid for as double time, this also to apply to Good Friday and Christmas Day ; time

and a quarter for all overtime and for night duty between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. ; guaranteed day for each time of signing on duty ; guaranteed week, exclusive of Sunday.

Rest : At least twelve hours rest between each turn of duty at home station ; at least nine hours when booked off away from home station.

Wages : Enginemen and electric motormen, 14s. per day ; if reduced to firemen or electric trainmen, 14s. per day. Firemen and electric trainmen, 10s. per day, or after 15 years service without promotion to driver, 14s. per day ; if reduced to cleaners or gatemen, to receive 10s. per day. Cleaners and electric train gatemen, 7s. per day of 8 hours.

Higher Duties : Firemen and electric trainmen, employed as enginemen or electric motormen, to receive not less than the engineman's or motorman's rate of pay, each turn of duty to be recorded, and after completing 313 turns as such, or 15 years in the service, whichever comes first, to be rated as enginemen or motormen. Cleaners and gatemen when employed on work other than cleaning, firing, gatework, etc., to receive the rate of pay of that work, or their own rate of pay, whichever is the highest.

In every Agreement a clause to be included as follows :—For the regulation of advances and reductions in accordance with the cost of living, the cost of living during June, 1917, shall be the unit. Every ten per cent. increase in the cost of living from that date shall warrant a ten per cent. increase in the standard rate of pay, reductions to be on the same basis, but no reductions in the rate of pay shall take place if the cost of living falls below the June, 1917, Board of Trade returns.

Rent Allowance : 5s. per week special rent allowance to all men in the London area and expensive industrial centres.

Mileage Rates : 130 miles on express passenger trains to be paid as one day ; 100 miles on local passenger trains and express goods trains to be paid as one day. All miles run in excess to be paid for at the rate of 10 miles per hour.

Lodging Allowance : 2s per day where the company provide

accommodation ; 3s. per day where the men provide their own. In each case 6d. an hour extra for each hour exceeding ten, when booked away from home station.

Holidays : 14 days holiday with pay after 12 months service.

Irreducible Minimum : No agreement that brings about a reduction in the amount received under the present wages scales, plus bonus and allowances, to be accepted.

Any who from ill-health or defective eyesight, brought about in their employment, are taken off the footplate, shall be retained in the companies' employment, and be paid not less than the rate of pay they were receiving when taken off the footplate.

We shall come presently, in the next chapter, to the prolonged arguments that occupied from February 12th to August 28th of 1919, with the object of securing that National Programme. It seems essential for the moment, however, to adhere to the events of 1917, for the Conference which fashioned the Programme was quickly followed by the eight hours day campaign just dealt with, and by the wage negotiations and cost of living basis. It was arranged that in those negotiations before the Committee on Production, witnesses other than members of the E.C. should be called, drivers, firemen, and cleaners were drawn from the various systems to give evidence in the arbitration proceedings. Summaries of the evidence given have appeared both in Special Circulars and in the " Journal," and the presentation of the case, it may be added, resulted in an increase of the war wage of railwaymen by 5s. per week to those of 18 years and over, and 2s. 6d. to those under that age. The award arrived on November 20th, and the increase became payable in all cases from the first full week in December, making the total war wage one pound weekly. Within a few days the increase was advanced to 6s. and 3s. respectively, on a 2 per cent. increase in the cost of living.

On Friday, August 31st, before this hearing began, the E.C. had met the Railway Executive and had discussed the question of increased lodging allowances, the provision of food when booked off unexpectedly, the fuller application of Clause 72 of the Royal

Commission's Report on all systems, and increased wages. The Railway Executive sympathetically discussed the first three questions, but could only offer the agreement already operating, which turned the war bonus into war wages, with further consideration later on. There was acrimony existing towards the Society at the time, as the N.U.R. was doing its best, subsequent to the libel action, to disprove the claim of the Society to represent the footplate fraternity. Those foolish efforts found an echo in the Trade Union Congress, but as they all proved only hurtful to the N.U.R., and resulted in the rapid growth of the Associated, they need not be argued here.

Brief allusion should be made here, I think, to the tremendous part played by locomotive men in the war. There was a never-ending stream of traffic between England and France for over five years, and it loaded the railways excessively. Drivers and firemen willingly gave themselves to the supreme task, and hundreds of cases were recorded of men working twenty, thirty, forty, and even up to seventy hours continuously. This exhausting toil gave the zest of desperation to the demand for the recognition of an eight hour day, and when it began steadily to operate in 1919, men laughed at the change, and wives were very glad over the marked improvement. Let us look at some figures of the first year of war only. Up to August, 1915, 100,000 officers, 2,586,000 other ranks, and 542,000 horses, were moved from point to point. The supplies sent to France included 288,000 tons of food ; 533,000 tons of forage, 59,000 tons of fuel, 29,000 tons of medical stores, seventeen million gallons of petrol, and nearly five million gallons of oil, in addition to 491,000 mail bags, 184,000 tons of engineering stores, and 131,000 tons of ordnance. Rolling stock was shipped in great quantities, and many complete branch lines were taken up entire and relaid in France.

Every company had its specially built ambulance trains, splendidly fitted as complete hospitals of eight wards, including isolation wards, to carry the wounded from Dover, Southampton, and Newhaven to the great military hospitals in all parts of the country.

Heavy trains of munitions and heavy trains of wounded passed each other on the line, these hospital trains being distinguished by the large red crosses on every coach. Every station had its first-aid department and its free buffet for soldiers and sailors. Everywhere the railways reflected war conditions, and sittings of the Executive Committee were distinguished by the explosion of bombs dropped by aeroplanes and airships of the enemy in dangerously close proximity.

Even the chairmen of companies had something complimentary to say about the services of railwaymen during those tragic years. For example, the following :—

Lord Muncaster, at the annual meeting of the Furness Railway, February 17th, 1917 :—" May I say a few words on the services which have been rendered to you by our officers and staff during probably the most trying and difficult time which the railways have ever passed through? . . . The work of the officers and staff has necessarily been greatly increased, and has been carried out in a very satisfactory manner to the Government, the railway, and the public."

Lord Claude Hamilton, M.P., at the Great Northern Railway meeting, February 11th, 1917 :—" At the present time 5,730 men, representing 17·3 per cent. of the total staff employed, have been either called or enlisted with the company's consent, whilst some 150 who left without permission are known to have joined the Army or Navy. I regret to record that 209 men have been killed in action or died of wounds, whilst a number have been reported "missing" for months. The men who have been reported wounded and at the various hospitals number 200 to 300. All these men have been communicated with, and where possible visited, and comforts supplied to them, and they feel that the company and their employees are taking a continuing interest in their welfare."

Mr. H. W. Thornton (at the same meeting) : " I am proud to say that every man in the service of the company, however humble his position, has loyally and patriotically supported the manage-

ment, and done his share in contributing towards the success of this war."

Sir Frederick Banbury, M.P., at the Great Northern Railway meeting, February 11th, 1917: "I should like to say one word upon the great services which have been rendered to you by our officers and staff during a very trying and difficult period. A very great amount of traffic has been carried, and as you all know, the staff has been greatly depleted. Consequently the work which has fallen upon our men and our officers has been greatly increased. I think that you owe a great debt of gratitude to our officers and staff."

Viscount Churchill, at the Great Western Railway meeting, February 24th: "I may say without hesitation that we are having to deal with an enormous volume of traffic, greatly in excess of normal times. It is only owing to the most careful forethought on the part of our officers and the zealous co-operation of the staff that these difficulties have been able to be overcome."

Sir Gilbert Henry Claughton, Bart., at the London & North Western Railway meeting, February 25th: "It speaks volumes for those both in authority and under authority for the way they have wholeheartedly grasped the importance of efficiency under most difficult and trying circumstances. . . . It only remains for me to give a cheering word of gratitude and encouragement to our staff."

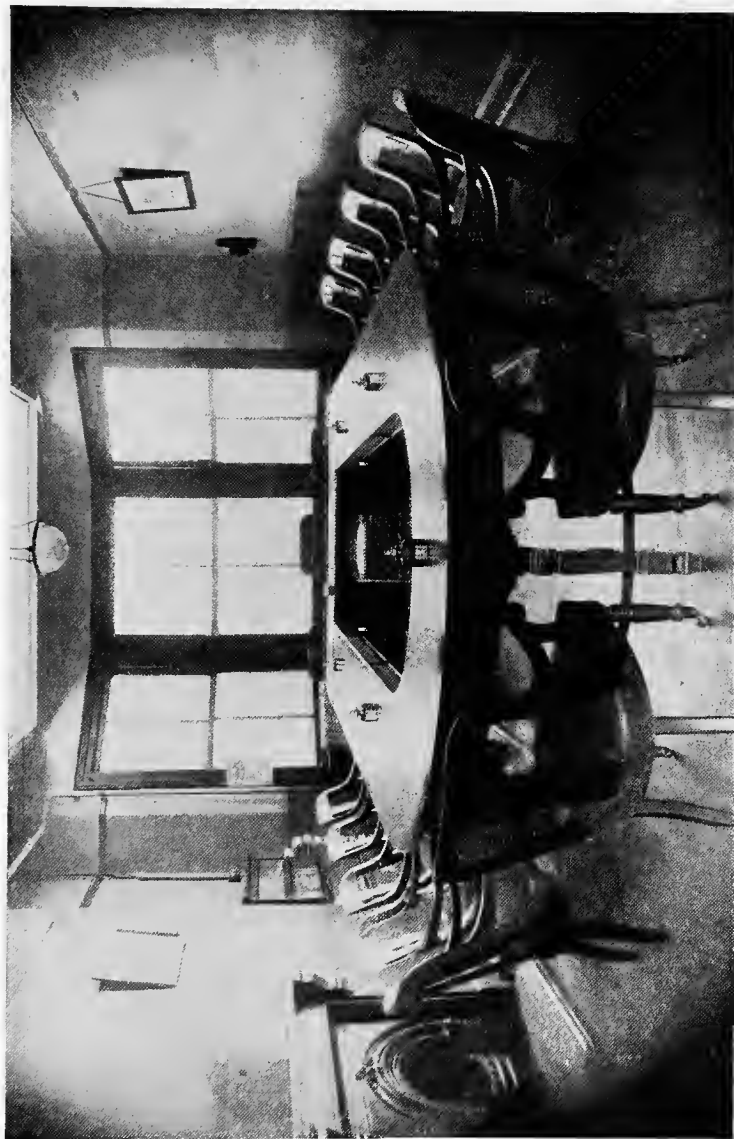
During the years 1917 and 1918 there was a very marked increase in the number of women and girls employed as engine cleaners. Being only a temporary feature of railway life, they were never admitted to the Society, but thousands of women were daily engaged in cleaning engines and moving about the sheds clad in various styles of overalls, leggings, puttees, and trousers. It is appropriate to mention here, I think, that the pressure of war conditions contributed to the most terrible railway disaster on record, the wrecking of a troop train from Scotland, near to Gretna, on May 22nd, 1915, which entailed a death roll of 227. At that time human life was going so cheaply, in such wholesale slaughter on the Continent,

that this awful calamity did not evoke a tithe of the interest that Aisgill did in 1913, or that Newtown did on January 26th of 1921. The operation of D.O.R.A., too, and the fear of depressing national spirits, caused a suppression of details of the Gretna catastrophe.

For eleven years, up to the close of 1917, Mr. Geo. Wride had been an active and earnest member of the Executive, and on the expiration of his term of office on December 31st, 1917, his Executive colleagues marked his retirement by a smoking concert, at which Mr. W. W. Cooke handed to Mr. Wride an illuminated and framed address, the gift of his colleagues, in appreciation of services rendered, and inscribed: "Dear and Trusted Friend." It recorded 27 years membership, and six years of presidency, and the token of "personal and cordial affection" was signed by his colleagues in harness: Wm. Worthy Cooke, Wm. Stevenson, John Healey, W. Gamble, Barton Wild, W. J. R. Squance, J. H. Oxlade, Samuel Garrison, C. W. Jarman, James Walker, J. C. Branson, John Bromley, and Geo. Moore.

District Councils had been taking more definite shape since the Conference of 1917, and they were developing in all parts of the country on lines that were destined to have an important relation to the constitution of the Society. At first they were very educational, and at once they bridged a gap between the E.C. and the branches. In 1918 a list of these District Councils and the branches they represented was presented to the E.C., and each year saw a growth of their functions and responsibility, until in 1921 the A.A.D. faced the proposal to make them a definite part of the Constitution, and an electoral source for the members of the Executive.

Mr. Worthy Cooke was elected president, and Mr. W. Stevenson Vice-President, for the year 1918, and Mr. A. Holder received a welcome on taking his seat as representative of Bristol District. While the year 1917 was giving place to 1918, important correspondence had passed between the General Secretary and Sir Auckland Geddes, Minister of National Service, which culminated in conferences with that Minister during January. The subject was a



The Executive Council Room at Head Office.

further comb-out of man-power for the Army, to which were related the questions of excessive hours and food shortage. Sir Auckland Geddes was already consulting the N.U.R., when, on December 21st of 1917, Mr. Bromley wrote that any arrangement made for further depletion of the footplate staff with people other than representatives of the Society would not be accepted by the members, and further, that any increased employment of inexperienced men on railway engines, or an aggregation of the excessive hours being worked, would lead to a revolt of a serious nature.

In a further letter dated January 2nd, 1918, the General Secretary said he had the instructions of the Executive to emphasise the fact that the footplates were so denuded of men as to cause unbearably excessive hours, turns of 15 and 16 hours being very common, and up to $29\frac{1}{2}$ hours being worked without relief. During the same period the Executive Committee were in communication with the Board of Trade and Railway Executive on the subject of excessive time. On January 18th representatives of the Executive, with the General Secretary, visited the Board of Trade, and handed in particulars of excessive hours, along with excessive weeks, ranging from 70 to 121 hours, affecting nearly 200 depots. On the previous day they had visited the Food Ministry, pointing out the difficulties of members in regard to food. Efforts had also been made to obtain the $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. increase recently granted to munition workers by Mr. Churchill, made applicable to the Society, but without success.

It was a time, too, of special conferences of the Labour movement on Peace, Food Supply, and other vital matters. The Labour Party decided to hold its Annual Conference in June for the future, and therefore brought forward its 1919 Conference to June, 1918, having thus three annual conferences in twelve months, to each of which the Society sent delegates. A letter was received from the War Office, inviting the Society to send 35 representatives on a visit to the war zone, but it was declined, although many trade unions sent representatives to France as the guests of the War Office.

Such are the ways of Government that it is necessary to

contemplate the motive for every such action, and January of 1918 brought the full explanation, in the conferences held between the Government and representatives of trade unionism on the further combing-out already alluded to. The conferences, two of which were addressed by the Prime Minister, were to explain the necessity of getting 420,000 more men for the Army and Navy, and in regard to footplatemen, Mr. Bromley had already expressed the impossibility of further diluting the locomotive workers, who had lost 11,000 of the regular workers since 1913. Substitution was the phrase of the day, but it is impossible to substitute drivers and firemen on railway work. Young boys were then being employed with men long past the retiring age. "I sometimes find lads on our shunting engines who have a difficulty in making themselves seen," wrote Ivor Gregory. "Imagine lads who have to climb to look through the eye-glass, and have to stretch to look over the side-door on some of our engines, being jointly responsible with the driver for safe working!" It should be further noted that during this period of draining of men from essential industries for the fighting line, an orgy of luxury spending was rampant in England. The war profiteer had become a real and plentiful person, numbering thousands, and all anxious to display outwardly their new wealth. Motor-cars were booming so much that one popular make was advanced £100 in price per car in a single week. Diamonds and fur-coats were the rage, and the jeweller and the furrier never had such years. Women especially were lavish in their expenditure, and a riot of luxury spending marked national life.

Correspondence was proceeding between Mr. Bromley and Lord Rhondda, then Food Controller, on the inadequate ration for men who were sent away from home unexpectedly. The Ministry of Food handed it over to the Railway Executive, to whom Mr. Bromley pointed out the special need of a larger meat ration to firemen shovelling forward and feeding to the furnace three to eight tons of coal per day, and to drivers of shunting engines exerting full strength every time they reversed the engine gear. On February 27th Mr. Bromley went into the matter with members

of the Railway Executive, and the extra allowance was made to men who were booked or called upon at short notice to lodge away from home, as follows :—

	Quantity.	Price.
Meat	4 ounces	6½d.
Cheese	2½ ounces	2½d.
Biscuit (if required)	1 pound	6d.
Jam	4 ounces	2½d.
Tea	1 ounce	2d.

Cheese took the place of meat on meatless days.

Men were allowed to have any or all of the above, but no more of one article if others were not required. This addition to the home rations was specially helpful to men always travelling, but further efforts were made to get supplementary rations on account of arduous work, the above extras being allowed for absence from home. There were early and numerous complaints about the biscuit, which defied all human teeth, and was best cracked under the heel or with a coal hammer. It was very nutritious, the War Office said, but the grinding of it required a lot of perseverance

CHAPTER XX

The One Union Movement—The April (1918) Wage Advance—Panel of Parliamentary Candidates—New and Increased Benefits—The District Councils at Work—The September Advance—The Strikes of 1918.

EARLY in the year 1918 the One-union movement entered a new phase. Mr. J. E. Conlon, of the Neasden branch of this Society, had sent out a circular to branches strongly urging fusion of forces, and as it was headed with the title of this Society and the superscription of the Neasden branch, it had more attention than it deserved. The Neasden branch secretary got into touch with Head Office, and dissociated that branch from any knowledge of it. Actions of various kinds having been tried to secure fusion into the all-absorbing N.U.R., this was rather a subtle departure from some predecessors, but it met with the strongest objections from all parts of the country, and when the Neasden disclaimer became known there was indignation too. The position found its reflection in the 1918 A.A.D., which decided that Rule 9 should apply to all members of the Society who are members of the One-Union movement, or supporting such a movement. The rule in question debar any member of the Society, who is also a member of any other trade organisation, catering for railway locomotivemen, from occupying any salaried position, serving as a delegate, or occupying any other position in the Society.

That may seem a very poor topic to open a new chapter, but in fact it was a factor in the remarkable growth of membership that

began early in 1918 and has continued ever since. When there was serious trouble in 1917 over the eight hour day the Society had 35,000 members, but when there was serious trouble over the Mallow shooting tragedy in 1921 the Society had more than doubled that membership, a rate of growth that is perfectly amazing.

All this was accomplished as the result of intensely hard work at headquarters, and zeal all along the line. An application to the Inland Revenue Department had resulted in the increase of the abatement allowance to £2 to members on account of special occupational expenses, including £1 for overalls, and 10s. each for watch repairs and improvement classes. But that was only a preliminary and a minor consideration. On March 26th and 27th of 1918 the Executive was sitting in connection with the claim for the 12½ per cent. bonus, on which question the Railway Executive was met on March 27th, April 15th and 25th, when a final settlement was arrived at. Mr. Bromley argued before the Committee that large sections of railwaymen had been granted the bonus on the ground that they were connected with the maintenance and transport of munitions, and the drivers, firemen, and cleaners were equally entitled to that benefit.

Sir Herbert Walker said the Railway Executive Committee had no powers to extend that bonus to the men in whose behalf the appeal was made, and that it could only apply to men over 21 years of age. It would be more in conformity with previous agreements if a flat rate would be agreed upon. The deputation retired to consider the matter, and returned prepared to discuss the basis of an advance in the war wage.

After discussion, it was agreed as follows :—

- (A) That the war wages now being paid to locomotive drivers, firemen, and cleaners be increased as under :
 - Male employees, 18 years and upwards, 4s. per week.
 - Boys under 18 years of age, 2s. per week.
- (B) That these increased payments shall apply as from the first full pay week after the 25th April, 1918.
- (c) That this agreement is entered into subject to an opportunity

being afforded to either party concerned to ask for reconsideration when necessity arises, it being understood that the men's representatives would not hereafter bring forward any demand for or based on the $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. bonus or wages.

The agreement was signed by Sir H. A. Walker for the R.E.C., and by Messrs. Worthy Cooke and J. Bromley for the A.S.L.E. & F. It was certainly a very good fruit of the enterprise, for there was no acceptance here of a restrictive clause against further applications, and the advances won were equivalent in value to a $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the wages of men over 21 years. Opportunity was taken to discuss other subjects with the R.E.C., including the difficulty of meeting the chief officers of the L. & N.W.R., and the improvement of the Conciliation Scheme, to obtain better negotiating machinery.

The Political Fund members had been meeting with a view to forming a panel of Parliamentary candidates, in readiness for a general election that was known to be pending, and could not be long deferred after peace was once secured. A ballot of the membership of that fund for twelve Parliamentary candidates resulted in the following selection, it being understood that Mr. Bromley was already nominated and known as the prospective Parliamentary candidate for North East Leeds :—Ivor Gregory, 3,709 ; G. Moore, 3,231 ; Barton Wild, 3,159 ; A. Mason, 2,947 ; W. J. Squance, 2,876 ; W. W. Cooke, 2,486 ; H. J. Oxlade, 2,411 ; Geo. Wride, 2,393 ; John Drummond, 2,226 ; R. Hill ; 1,734 ; R. T. Mackereth, 1,401 ; J. Richards, 1,309. Mr. Oxlade withdrew before the ballot was completed. The names mentioned, with the exception of Mr. Oxlade, therefore constituted the Panel of Parliamentary candidates, but had not the power to pledge the financial support of the Society without the consent of the E.C. The Secretary of the Labour Party was informed of the formation of the Panel, along with an intimation that the Society was prepared to accept a reasonable proportion of financial responsibility, to be agreed upon between the Constituency and the Society, for three candidates

in addition to Mr. Bromley. It was resolved, in view of the urgency of political changes, to specially appeal to all members to pay the Parliamentary Levy, and to ask those already paying it to contribute an extra shilling that year to strengthen the position financially.

Mr. Cooke reported to the same meeting that his name was going forward to a nomination meeting at Crewe, and his candidature was endorsed for the division, Messrs. Wild and Oxlade representing the Society at the nomination meeting. Mr. Brownlie, of the A.S.E., was chosen at that meeting. Organisation arrangements were made for North East Leeds, and Mr. Gregory's candidature for Nuneaton received the official and hearty sanction of the Society.

Each month of each year brought and still brings its list of disputed compensation cases for negotiation, and some of those handled on behalf of members are of a very interesting character. I recall one in 1918, concerning a member who sustained frostbite in the ear whilst on duty. He subsequently developed erysipelas, and then became seriously ill from Bright's disease. The company flatly refused liability, and there was the difficult question of proving an association between the frostbite and Bright's disease. Two medical men were called into consultation, and they were of opinion that there was a connection between the two. The case was then pressed, and full compensation was paid. This case is only one lifted out of hundreds I have read, all showing how badly an individual might fare if it were not for the strength of this Society.

The unobtrusive but exceedingly valuable work of the auditors and trustees through all these years is worthy of all praise. They work out the return on investments and make sure that funds are soundly placed and for good return. Their names have constantly changed, but their duties have continually increased, and they have been performed with care and devotion.

In April of 1918 correspondence with the Secretary of the General Managers' Committee was considered, in which the E.C. was asked to draft its desired negotiating machinery into such form as to become an amendment to the Draft Conciliation Scheme. It was resolved :

" That Mr. Clower be informed that the intention of our

1917 A.A.D. was the rejection of the Conciliation Scheme, which was accepted on behalf of the Society in March and May, 1916, and that this E.C. now definitely rejects such scheme; also, that we are not prepared to accept the scheme even if it should now be accepted in principle by the other parties to the negotiation, as such Scheme does not meet the requirements of locomotive-men. We also instruct the General Secretary to forward our new machinery, with a request for a meeting between the General Managers' Committee and this E.C. at the earliest possible moment."

Mr. Bromley next had an interview with Sir Francis Dent on the matter, and also on the extra food ration, and the E.C. set to work to draft certain clauses showing the method of election of delegates and of negotiations between local delegates, Delegation Boards, and other bodies mentioned in our approved machinery, the scheme then to be fully discussed. This was done, and the completed re-draft of negotiating machinery, as an amendment to the Conciliation Scheme, was considered, when it was resolved :—

"That the new machinery, as revised, be adopted, and forwarded forthwith to the Railway General Managers' Committee," which was asked to arrange an early meeting, not later than May 22nd. The meeting took place on May 24th, when the E.C. Sub-Committee discussed with the General Managers' Committee the machinery suggested by the Society in conjunction with the Conciliation Scheme. The Secretary of the Committee on Reconstruction, and Mr. Thomas, strongly urged the Society to give evidence before that Committee as to the desirability of the application of the terms of the Whitley Report to the railway service. Eventually the Advisory Committee, Section 3, was notified that Mr. Bromley would give evidence, and a statement was prepared and presented.

Up to the year 1918 the N.U.R. had been disposed to deride the National Programme and other movements of the A.S.L.E. & F., but in that year there came a change, and the N.U.R. began the great task of evolving a national programme for all its grades. It

even confirmed the Mileage Clause it had so strongly attacked, and began a movement on behalf of firemen with religious zeal. By that time, however, the N.U.R. was distinctly out of touch with the negotiations of the Society, and the Conference of 1918 recognised the advantage of independent action by adopting the following resolution :—

“ That this Conference re-affirms the decision of the 1917 Conference, that in future this Society will not be hampered by the presence of the N.U.R., and seeing that we have now established our claim to represent the locomotivemen and electric trainmen, we hereby decide that no agreement can be arrived at between this Society and the N.U.R., other than the complete transfer of their members who are eligible to join this Society, which is in accordance with the Trade Union Congress resolutions of 1906 and 1915.”

This was adopted by 49 votes to 3. ‘

The Conference of 1918 devoted considerable attention to its auxiliary benefits, notably the Orphan Fund and the Benevolent Fund. Many benefits were increased without increase of contributions, and in the case of the Orphan Fund, the benefits were allowed after a shorter period of membership and to continue for a year longer than perviously. Strike pay was increased 100 per cent. at once, and the protection sum for delegates and other representatives of members was greatly improved. Protection members had their benefits increased and a death benefit and retiring allowance were voted for all who voluntarily pay an additional penny per week. A notable alteration in the whole system of the Benevolent Fund was made by the Conference, for instead of the “ calls ” of fourpence per member for each casualty, the Fund was placed on a contributory basis of threepence per week, thus giving an assurance of £38 for threepence per week, a proposition that easily eclipsed the capitalist insurance corporations, although the occupational risks are above the average. The sum of £38 has been

paid out many times since, and gratefully acknowledged in the "Journal" by the recipients, but I want to remark here that sometimes the gratitude is overdone. For what a man pays, his mourning relatives are entitled to receive as a right, and not as a favour. For kindness and courtesy in administration I like to see appreciation, but profuse thanks for what the member provided before-hand belong to his memory.

Under the new rules of the Assurance Fund, formerly Benevolent Fund, the benefits ranged from £5 to £38, according to years of membership, and the same scale of benefit was applied for loss of situation through error of judgment, for accident which leads to removal from the footplate, and for failing to pass the eyesight test, very important additions to the material advantages of the Society, and £20 was allowed to a member on retiring at 60 years of age or over. A retiring allowance was provided for members at 60 with ten years membership, fifteen years membership, and twenty years. Thus members were able, after 1918, to pay for death benefits of £5 to £20, £25, £38, £44, or £58 as they desired; and for £7 10s., £11, £15, £20, or £35 retiring allowance at sixty, in addition to weekly superannuation of 4s., 5s., 6s., to 7s. per week. These were notably good benefits, a possible further need being the increase, as funds allow, of the superannuation allowance to sums that meet more accurately the post-war cost of living.

The year 1918 brought an extension of the military age to fifty years, all men under that age being liable to conscription. The extension led to large numbers of grey-haired men, and many physically unfit men, being paraded before the medical boards. At fifty there is hardly a more fit class in the country than our drivers, and consequently large numbers of them were notified to muster for examination, regardless of the occupational exemption they carried, which caused the doctors to labour in vain, and caused the Executive and General Secretary a good deal of extra work in taking care that the exemptions were properly observed. Many ridiculous things were done in the re-shuffling of men, skilled accountants being turned into butchers, and teachers into farm

hands, but to make engine drivers become navvies was too ridiculous to be allowed.

June 20th of 1918 brought the concession of additional rations so long sought for men on duty and overwork, special tickets being obtainable through the Local Food Control Committees.

The inaugural meetings of the newly constituted and officially recognised District Councils were held during the summer of 1918, governed by the new rules which were then with the Registrar for approval, the meetings being all convened by Executive members in the following order :—

No. 1, Mr. H. J. Oxlade ; No. 2, Mr. Squance ; No. 3, Mr. Jarman ; No. 4, Mr. Holder ; No. 5, Mr. Stevenson ; No. 6, Mr. Oxlade ; Nos. 7 and 8, Mr. Gamble ; Nos. 9 and 11, Mr. Cooke ; No. 16, Mr. Branson ; Nos. 13 and 15, Mr. Wild ; No. 14, Mr. Healey ; Nos. 16 and 17, Mr. Walker.

The National Programme was revised and improved by the 1918 Conference establishing a mileage rate of 120 miles on express passenger trains and 100 miles on local passenger trains as one day's work, and a lodging allowance of 7s. 6d. per day where men provide their own accommodation when lodging away from home. It included compulsory retirement after 35 years service, on a pension of not less than two-thirds of the wages

Many branches were restless under the truce of October, 1914, and were pressing for the presentation of this National Programme, and for an increased war wage. The Executive resolved to ask the Railway Executive for an increase of 10s. per week to meet the still increasing cost of living. There was also political activity, and the nomination of several Executive members and officials by branches for various constituencies.

That brings us, I think, to the supreme event of the year 1918, the special meetings which began in London on August 16th, and continued into October, resulting in another substantial wage advance. The General Secretary had sent a letter to the Railway Executive on July 19th, applying for an increase of ten shillings, and to this a reply was received saying there was "no justification

for any increase." An interview was arranged for August 16th, and the claim was then emphasised for 10s. for all those over 18, and 5s. under that age, but that youths under 18 acting as firemen should receive the adult amount. It was also claimed that the award should be made on the eight hour basis. The claim was placed before the Board of Trade, but as nothing had matured up to August 27th, the General Secretary again wrote, as a result of which a meeting was arranged for September 11th. At this meeting it was stated the eight hour basis could not be acceded, and that the full war wage could not be granted to boys under 18. Whilst the increased cost of living warranted an advance of 2s. 9d., the Government proposed to offer two alternatives—3s. 6d. to men over 18, with 1s. 9d. to boys ; or 4s. to men over 21, and 2s. to boys under 18, with nothing for those between 18 and 21. These were refused, and a further meeting was held the following day, when the offer was increased to 5s. and 2s. 6d., but no eight hour basis, and nothing more than usual for boys under 18 employed as firemen, the increase to take effect from Monday, September 16th, with two week back pay on flat rates.

This offer, said the Railway Executive, was final, and the agreement would be ready to sign that night, and that Sir Herbert Walker was leaving for his holidays the next morning. The N.U.R., it should be added, was also negotiating, and had just left the Conference Chamber when the Executive entered. The Executive, therefore, got the impression that the N.U.R. was accepting, but still would neither accept nor sign. On the following day, September 13th, the Chairman had gone on holiday, so the position was wired to him, and arrangements were made for him to return to a meeting, along with the President of the Board of Trade, on September 17th. In fulfilment of this arrangement, meetings were held with these gentlemen at the Board of Trade on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 17th and 18th, Mr. Barnes representing the War Cabinet. At these prolonged meetings, the full claims were again pressed, and it was agreed that as the full war wage could not be conceded to boys under 18 acting as firemen, in future no more boys under that

age should be made firemen. That was at once a distinct gain, reacting on footplate conditions and making for greater safety.

Next it was agreed that a sliding scale arrangement should apply to war wages, an acceptance in September, 1918, of the scheme advocated by the Society in September of 1916. It was to operate to follow the increased cost of living upwards, but not to reduce the war wage below 30s. in any circumstances. This was the second notable gain, and thirdly certain pledges to the Society, as to after-conditions, were renewed and enlarged upon. The flat rate figures of 5s. and 2s. 6d. were not increased, except that the flat rate advance should be paid back from August 5th, as being near the date of application. On September 19th a further and final conference was held at the Board of Trade without agreement or further offer. The sub-committee therefore returned to the full Executive, and whilst consideration was being given to the position, it was learned that the N.U.R. had accepted the settlement. That distinctly altered the outlook, and the question to face was of using the Society's strength alone to enforce something better, or to realise that the pace had been forced to the utmost limit the War Cabinet would concede, and to accept.

The latter course was adopted. It was agreed to accept the position under protest, and the terms of settlement were not signed by the Society. The terms were as follow :—

5s. per week increase to those over 18 ; 2s. 6d. to those under 18 ; to date from Monday, September 23rd, with back payment from August 5th, a sliding scale arrangement to be set up at once to revise the war wage on every increase of four or five per cent., taking 110 per cent. in its relationship to 30s. as the basis.

After the close of negotiations the Executive passed the following resolution on September 20th :—

“ That we accept under strong protest the ultimatum of the War Cabinet of the award of 5s. and 2s. 6d., and we appoint a sub-committee of the Executive Council to meet representatives of the Government with a view to consider, and if possible

arrange for, a basis for a sliding scale, such as was offered by the Society to the Railway Executive in September, 1916, and which has now, after all this time, been accepted. We feel that the offer of the Government does not cover the increased cost of living peculiar to our members. We, however, advise our members to accept it, along with a suitable sliding scale, if such can be mutually agreed upon, and to conserve their strength for that fight with the Government and the profiteering classes which will take place in the near future."

The settlement gave little satisfaction, and indeed was scarcely announced when trouble of a serious character began. The traffic men at Llantrisant struck on September 20th, and the Society members followed. On Saturday the 21st, and Sunday the 22nd, other stations followed suit in the South Wales district, and by Sunday night the men of both societies were out at Pontypool, Newport, Aberbeeg, and Severn Tunnel, with several other stations seriously affected, the strike even spreading as far North as Manchester. The Executive and General Secretary proceeded to Newport, where the General Secretaries of both societies addressed the strikers and advised a general resumption of work, repeating the same advice at a mass meeting at Cardiff. The strike closed in Cardiff the same night, September 25th, and all branches were telegraphed to resume duty, but they distrusted the telegram. All that night the branches were telephoning, motoring, and cycling into Newport, to see if it were genuine. The Shrewsbury branch got the police to telephone the Newport police, asking them to ascertain from Mr. Bromley if the telegram was genuine. A number of Severn Tunnel men arrived in the early morning darkness with the same object, and one of them got to Mr. Bromley's bedroom at the hotel. He sent the man down for his colleagues, and on returning they got into Mr. Thomas's bedroom by mistake. He gave them a written instruction to resume, but the Severn Tunnel men would not accept the note when it was conveyed to them, and waited for a personal assurance from Mr. Bromley. The train

conveying him to London had to stop specially at Severn Tunnel Junction to enable him to assure the men before they would return.

Stratford was out, too, resuming on the 26th, but the South Western, Brighton, and South Eastern did not return until the evening of the 27th, after a great meeting on Clapham Common, from which Mr. Bromley headed a procession of seven hundred loco. men through South West London to the South Eastern depot at Battersea, then on to the Brighton line depot, and finally to Nine Elms, the men resuming with the same solidarity as they began. That strike of September, 1918, was unconstitutional, spasmodic, and irregular, yet magnificent, and it gave great strength to the Executive in their negotiations.

The Executive had been summoned to London on August 26th to assist the members on the London Electric lines, and the position was reviewed with a deputation of the men. Meetings were arranged, and on the morning of August 27th the General Secretary and Mr. Garrison, the E.C. representative of the electric men, made the following agreement with the Electric Companies :—

- 1.—That all members be reinstated without victimisation.
- 2.—No women strikers to be punished in any way for striking.
- 3.—The management to meet the Executive the next day to discuss outstanding grievances.
- 4.—All strikers to be invited to resume duty at once.

In the conference on the following day many improvements were secured, making for quicker promotion to higher rates of pay, better terms for Sunday duty and overtime, improved supply of clothing, and several other considerations.

These were only some of the events of the year that brought the end of war hostilities.

CHAPTER XXI

A Boon to Members—Chafing Under the Truce—End of the War—
The Improved National Programme—A General Election—
London Traffic Agreement—The Tube Strike—National
Programme Presented—Story of Famous Negotiations.

CERTAIN important resolutions were adopted by the Executive in October of 1918, and some of them should be recorded here. One referred to the large number of locomotivemen transferring from the N.U.R. to the Society, and the desire to give them facilities to join the Orphan Fund. It was therefore resolved :—

“ That all members of this Society, new members and transfers from other societies, be allowed to join the Orphan Fund on payment of sixpence entrance fee, and one penny per week contributions, and be entitled to immediate benefits on receipt of the entrance fee at General Office. That the sum of £1,000 from the Protection Fund be set aside for the purpose of paying 4s. 4d. into the Orphan Fund for each person joining the Orphan Fund, and thus enabling them to receive immediate benefit in accordance with rule.”

This assistance was given at a very important time, for England, in common with the rest of Europe, was just enduring another of those frightful waves of “ influenza,” so-called for want of a better definition. This rapid fever caused pneumonia to supervene in large numbers of cases, and all too frequently death came within a few days. It was highly infectious, and the thousands of victims

caused all men to seriously think about their dependants in the event of themselves being struck. We never have had such a sad stream of obituary notifications in the history of the Society as in the last few weeks of the world war. The timeliness of the Executive's provision will therefore be more fully realised.

The next one I wish to quote had special reference to the increasing restlessness under the prolonged duration of the Truce of 1914 :—

“ Resolved that the General Secretary place before our Solicitors the Truce agreement and all subsequent agreements since September 30th, 1914, affecting the Truce, war bonus, war wage, and eight hours agreements, for a definite opinion if a notice to terminate the agreement of the 1st October, 1914, by six weeks notice would be valid, and if not, why not? Also what powers we have to enforce the drafting of a new scheme of negotiation for our members; also what steps should be taken to allow us to put forward demands for improved wages and conditions of service for our members? Counsel's opinion to be taken if necessary.”

Mr. Bromley spent his holiday in Scotland that year, and blended duty with pleasure by addressing quite a series of useful open and branch meetings, and by interviewing the General Manager of the N.B.R. in regard to several grievances. The Postal Censor stopped the transmission of the “ Journal ” abroad until the General Secretary visited the department and obtained a permit. One gets the thrill of the coming of peace to the nations on discovering a resolution like this :—

PEACE.

“ Resolved that the Executive Committee, heralding with joy the signs of coming Peace amongst the sorrow-stricken and exhausted peoples of Europe, on the just and equitable basis set out in the 14 Points of President Wilson, and further recognising that a just and lasting peace cannot be brought about by Capitalist Governments and secret diplomacy, but can only be brought about by organised Labour in all countries, respectfully urge

upon the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party to bring about a meeting with the full International, at the same time and place as that of the Plenipotentiaries of the belligerent Powers, such Plenipotentiaries to include one appointed by organised Labour, so that the workers of the nations shall have that voice in the settlement which is theirs by right, and which will, in our opinion, bring into existence such machinery as will for all time prevent a recurrence of the circumstances which were responsible for bringing about the present horrible carnage, suffering, and death."

Steps were taken to assist widows, dependants, and pensioners to secure more adequate allowances from the State, and the Committee dispersed with a view to re-assembling on January 6th, 1919. But the historic event of November 11th, 1918, the signing of the Armistice by Germany at 5 a.m., which led to the "cease fire" along all fronts at 11 a.m., changed everybody's arrangements and outlooks. It was a day of deep thankfulness, marked by a general closing of factories and works, but the railways ran on, with every man on the footplate feeling intense joy and relief that the world's greatest ordeal by battle had ended at last. The next day found the Committee assembled in London, specially summoned in consequence of the great change, and for further considering the sliding scale addition to war wage. On Tuesday, November 15th, the familiar sliding scale arrangement was signed, providing an increase of 1s. for every five points rise in the cost of living, the war wage standing on November 1st at 33s.

On this matter the efforts of the sub-committee were accepted, and the General Secretary and President were empowered to sign the agreement. Special circulars were sent out to branches on November 28th, November 29th, and December 12th, giving the story of proceedings on this matter and in reference to the eight hours day. The National Programme was revised forthwith, the new points being sanctioned by the Conference of October, 1919.

A General Election was imminent upon the signing of the

Armistice, and the Society was represented by three official candidates, Mr. Bromley in North East Leeds, Mr. Gregory at Nuneaton, and Mr. Mason at Chester. How disappointing to Labour that election of December, 1918, proved to be is now a matter of history. It was a khaki and Coalition election, the dominant issues being the amount of German indemnity and the punishment of the Kaiser. It came hard upon the eight hours day victory previously described, and Mr. Geo. Moore, the Assistant Secretary, and father of the Orphan Fund, hit upon the very happy idea of celebrating the victory by every member devoting one day's pay to augment the Orphan Fund, upon which recent years had taken heavy toll. It is one of the priceless departments of the Society, and the idea caught on at once. Some gave a day's pay, some gave donations, some promoted special enterprises and subscription lists, and the total result was a magnificent fillip to the deserving fund.

The Report for the year 1918 showed total funds to have reached £241,893, an increase during the year of £11,465. The membership stood at 39,940, an increase of 3,236 during the year, and there were 338 branches, an increase of fourteen. The value per member at the close of the war era was £6 1s. 2d., a position which compared most favourably with other unions. Superannuation benefits had been increased by £681, and three elections had cost £1,552. The circulation of the "Journal" had risen to 15,240 copies per issue, and all indications were of even greater progress in the future. Unfortunately, seventy-eight of our members were killed on active service during the year, as compared with 47 during 1917.

In a New Year letter to branches, dated January, 1919, Mr. Bromley wrote :—

"The great European War is ended, and our members will be shortly returning from Army Service to their old occupations, and they will have to admit that our Society, at least, has not forgotten them, or been idle in efforts for their welfare during their absence; for not only have we kept unbroken their membership without contribution, and cared for the dependants of the fallen, but have prepared a better footplate life for them

on their return. They will come back to an eight hour day, greatly increased wages, standardisation of conditions of service, and great improvements in footplate life generally. We have emerged with an increased prestige, a broader outlook, and with fixed intentions for the future."

So away went the Society on the adventures of a new year, with the hope of obtaining 50,000 members, and none realised then what a strenuous and adventurous year 1919 was destined to prove. On the night before the Armistice, when the whole world was on the qui vive for news, the Lincoln branch had presented to the General Secretary a very fine dressing-case, an engraved umbrella, and a leather pocket-case. This nice example of appreciation was emulated in other centres, and it culminated in far more substantial presentations of a national character later on, including a solid gold watch, duly inscribed, with gold albert, and other gifts to Mrs. Bromley and himself.

On January 15th the sub-committee interviewed Sir Albert Stanley in reference to the National Programme, as a result of which letters passed which indicated a grave state of unrest owing to the long delay. Special meetings of branches were held on February 2nd to consider the matter, and many resolutions of protest against further delay were sent to the Executive. Other subjects intervened for a few days, one being the Nationalisation of Railways, which had been quite positively announced by Mr. Churchill during his campaign in Dundee; another was the negotiation with the Army authorities for the release of soldier members to their employment, as their absence was impeding the progress of the eight hours day. Then the shipping deal made by the Government, under which £20,000,000 worth of shipping passed to private firms, came under condemnation. The London & Provincial Union of Licensed Vehicle Workers asked the Executive to receive a deputation, and to consider the advisability of an arrangement between the two societies in the London district, which arrangement was made and approved. It provided that to enable the two unions to better

protect the interests of their members employed by the London Combine of Tramways, Buses and Electric Railways, they should assist each other in offensive or defensive action, and act jointly when necessary :—

- (A) The A.S.L.E. & F. agree, in the event of the need arising, to call out its members on the Tube Railways and District Railways.
- (B) The A.S.L.E. & F. to call out members on the London electric trains of steam railways.
- (C) The L.P.U.L.V.W. agree to call out all 'buses and trams, and, should necessity arise, any other section of their members.
- (D) The L.P.U.L.V.W. to call out any other effective section if necessity arises.

The agreement received the sanction of both Conferences in May, 1919.

Another serious intervention was the strike of London Electric Trainmen. The Executive had met the Railway Executive on January 7th, to adjust problems which might arise in the operation of the eight hours day, when it was understood that meal-times should continue until more evenly adjusted during the national negotiations. It was also understood that where brief meal reliefs had been given to electric trainmen, or brief stoppages on busy shunting engines for meals, the same would continue pending national negotiations. On January 30th, the President (Mr. Cooke) and General Secretary were informed by Sir Albert Stanley that the negotiations would commence on February 12th, and that an arrangement had been entered into with the N.U.R., and signed, dealing with the question of meal-times and overtime. It contained the following clause :—

“ In calculating the eight hours, time allotted for meals will not be counted in cases where time has hitherto been so allotted, for example :—

- 1.—A man hitherto booked on at 6, and working continuously until 4, will, if booked on at 6, cease working at 2; or, if he works later, will be paid overtime rate from 2.
- 2.—A man hitherto booked on at 6 and working until 5, with a meal hour between (say) 12 and 1, will, if booked on at 6, cease working at 3 (with an hour meal interval); or, if he works later, will be paid at overtime rate from 2."

Sir Herbert Walker was then called in, and it was understood that it only affected shedmen who had regular allotted meal-times, upon which Mr. Bromley signed. Sir H. Walker then said he considered it should apply to electric trainmen, to which reply was given that it would then cause serious trouble. It afterwards transpired that before the Society knew of the agreement, instructions had been issued on the electric companies that no meal reliefs were to be given with pay, and that there was to be an actual eight hours working day. Further, the L. & S.W. service conditions interpreted the agreement so that overtime on the eight hours day would only be paid at ordinary time rate. Friday, January 31st, was spent in negotiation with the electric railways, with Sir A. Stanley and Sir H. Walker, but the Railway Executive would not concede the claim of the Society, holding that it must be an eight hours working day, with no pay for meal reliefs.

Members on all the London Tube Railways struck on Sunday night, February 2nd, followed by the motormen on the L.B. & S.C.R., the District and Metropolitan remaining then at work. The Executive met on the following day, and made the strike official, calling out the members on the District Railway in support of those on the Tubes. Next the Executive decided to call out all steam men on the L.B. & S.C.R., and all the members on the L. & S.W.R., to prove their determination on this principle, and promised, if necessary, to follow this with a national strike of all the 42,000 members.

The District men struck and closed the line at once, and at the appointed hour the L. & S.W.R. men and the L.B. & S.C.R.

members did the same. The arrangement worked with wonderful precision, and London became totally dislocated and undone. Extraordinary scenes were witnessed on the streets, every sort of vehicle being pressed into service, and still many thousands had to walk. A meeting was arranged with Sir A. Stanley at 3.30 p.m. on February 5th, and it continued until 9 p.m. On the following day the Railway Executive and Sir Robert Horne (Minister of Labour) attended the Conference, and on February 7th all members were to be called out, but at nearly midnight the opposition yielded the claim "that no break whatever should take place within the eight hour day, with payment therefor," but contended that the break or relief should not be called a meal time. The following agreement was then made :—

"The Underground Trainmen to be booked on for eight hours work. Meal time will not be included in the eight hours, but in the new conditions of the eight hours day the companies will offer all reasonable facilities to meet the ordinary physical needs of the men."

A. H. STANLEY.

6th February, 1919.

J. BROMLEY.

Major Gilbert Szlumper, Secretary of the Railway Executive Committee, then wrote a letter applying the terms to the electric sections of other railways. In my view this is one of the most remarkable demonstrations in the history of the Society. It won an important principle single-handed, and it did it by wonderful marshalling of forces one after the other. There was abuse, of course, showers of it, and great strength was needed of mind and body to carry it through, but it was carried through with ability and courage. London, of course, was intensely pleased to get its services back, and for a few days it remembered the strength of the man at the front of the train.

Inside the next four months 6,000 new members had enrolled, and in Ireland Ivor Gregory had opened five new branches with 250 new members.

The next great and central business of 1919 was the standardisation of wages and national conditions of service. These constituted, without any question, the greatest, the most prolonged, and the most important negotiations ever embarked upon in the history of the Society. They began on February 12th, and concluded on August 28th, the official report of the proceedings extending to 1,543 pages. The result of it, too, furnished the finest charter of service that the locomotive workers of the United Kingdom had ever enjoyed. A mere summary of the case as presented by the representatives of the A.S.L.E. & F. extended to a volume of over six hundred pages, whilst a survey of the evidence given and questions asked and answered on four days in May—the 18th, 19th, 20th, and 27th—filled a handbook of 116 pages. My task, therefore, in focussing a miniature of these extended operations into this volume is a very considerable one.

Those engaged in the proceedings were :—

RAILWAY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE :—Rt. Hon. Sir Albert Stanley, M.P., Sir Herbert Walker, K.C.B. (Chairman), Sir Alexander Kaye Butterworth, K.C.B., Sir Francis Dent, Sir William Forbes, Sir Robert Turnbull, M.V.O., Mr. Frank Potter, Mr. Charles Dent, Mr. Tatlow, Mr. Joseph Rostern, Mr. D. A. Matheson, Mr. S. A. Parnwell, Mr. Howard Williams, Mr. Senior. Sir Auckland Geddes, M.P., attended in place of Sir A. Stanley, M.P., on several occasions. Sir R. Horne also attended.

NATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYMEN :—Mr. C. T. Cramp (President), Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P. (General Secretary), Mr. Walter Hudson (Assistant Secretary), Mr. H. C. Charlton, Mr. C. A. Henderson, Mr. A. Law, Mr. J. Jackson, Mr. A. Matthews.

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEMEN & FIREMEN :—Mr. W. W. Cooke (President), Mr. J. Bromley (General Secretary), Mr. W. A. Stevenson (Vice-President), Mr. B. Wild, Mr. W. J. R. Squance, Mr. H. J. Oxlade. Mr. S. Garrison also attended on several occasions.

On March 18th our General Secretary (Mr. John Bromley) issued a statement to branches, which contained the following :—

" The first Conference was held at the Board of Trade on February 12th, when our National Programme was explained in detail to the representatives of the Government.

" Owing to our wages demand being so much higher than that of the N.U.R. for Loco. men, we were asked to meet and endeavour to agree on one Loco. programme. We agreed to meet N.U.R. Loco. men only, and did so on two occasions, but were unable to get them to increase their Loco. wages claims. We, therefore, had to proceed with the two programmes. The highest rate for drivers asked by the N.U.R. was the same as that for signalmen, viz. :—15s. per day.

" The full Conference again met on February 21st, when the Loco. question was further considered in detail, and we were told that our demands on wages alone meant an annual increase of £12,887,775, and the full demands for all railwaymen an annual increase of £120,000,000. We again met on February 26th, when it was suggested to us that as much of our claim was based on the increased cost of living, we may consider the advisability of increased wage rates with the continuation of a war wage on a sliding scale, which would disappear as cost of living declined, leaving the higher wage rates for work performed. It was also suggested that a Loco. Sub-Committee should meet to go more closely into our claims, and, if possible, make a recommendation to the next meeting of the full Conference. This was agreed to, and the Sub-Committee, consisting of our own Sub-Committee and myself, two Loco. men from the N.U.R. and their General Secretary, several Loco. Engineers, and three General Managers, met on March 3rd, when certain national wage rates for drivers and firemen were suggested from the other side as a basis of discussion. As these suggestions still contained classification, and the rates were not high enough, we were unable to agree to any recommendation thereon. Your E.C., however, later drew up a further suggestion on the lines already indicated, in an endeavour to bring the negotiations to the concrete, which suggestion was submitted to the resumed Conference on March 6th. We were then told that if we could modify our demands on Sunday, overtime, night duty, etc., the Government would be able to offer higher daily rates for Loco. men.

" We again met on March 13th, when the discussion on side issues was resumed, and certain offers made for our consideration. It was then agreed that the case for other grades should have attention for a few days, and your representatives withdrew, leaving the N.U.R. to deal for other grades.

R.

" Your E.C. submitted counter proposals on the side issues, to be discussed at next Conference, if the other side will offer sufficiently high wage rates to balance. Hearing that the N.U.R. were breaking off negotiations, your E.C. have notified the Government that nothing must be allowed to delay the negotiations on behalf of Loco. men which this Society, representing the majority of such men, desires brought to a speedy issue."

For purposes of this Conference, the following programme was tabled :—

WAGES.

ENGINEMEN AND ELECTRIC MOTORMEN.

20s. per day (of 8 hours), plus sliding scale increase.

Enginemen or electric motormen reduced to firemen or electric trainmen to suffer no reduction in the above scale.

FIREMEN AND ELECTRIC TRAINMEN.

15s. per day (of 8 hours), plus sliding scale increase.

Any man working as a fireman or electric trainman who has been in the service for 15 years, and not promoted to engineman or electric motorman, to be paid the engineman's or electric motorman's scale.

Firemen or electric trainmen reduced to cleaners or electric train gatemen to suffer no reduction in the above scale.

CLEANERS AND ELECTRIC TRAIN GATEMEN.

10s. per day (of 8 hours), plus sliding scale increase.

PAYMENT WHEN ENGAGED ON HIGHER DUTIES.

Firemen and electric trainmen, when employed as enginemen or electric motormen, to be paid as the enginemen or electric motormen.

Each turn of duty to be recorded, and after completing 313 turns as such, consecutively or otherwise, or 15 years in the service, whichever comes first, to be paid the same as enginemen or electric motormen.

Cleaners or electric train gatemen, when employed as firemen or electric trainmen, to be paid the same as the fireman or the electric trainman. Each turn of duty to be recorded, and after completing 313 turns as such, consecutively or otherwise, or 5 years in the service, whichever comes first, to be paid the same as firemen or electric trainmen.

Cleaners or electric train gatemen, when employed on work other than cleaning, firing, electric trainmen's or electric train gatemen's duties, to receive the wages applicable to the duty they are called upon to perform, or their own rate of pay, whichever is the highest.

THE COST OF LIVING.

The cost of living during October, 1918, shall be the unit.

Every 10 per cent. increase in the cost of living from that date shall warrant a 10 per cent. increase in the standard rate of pay, reductions to be on the same basis.

No reduction in the rate of pay shall take place if the cost of living falls below the October, 1918, Board of Trade returns.

A memorandum of the cost of living at the date of such agreement to be made. The Board of Trade returns to be accepted as the basis of future negotiations for increases or reductions.

SPECIAL RENT ALLOWANCE.

5s. per week special Rent Allowance to be granted to all men in the London area and in other expensive industrial centres.

MILEAGE RATES.

120 miles on express passenger trains to be paid for as one day.

96 miles on local passenger trains and express goods trains to be paid for as one day.

All miles run in excess in either case to be paid for at the rate of 10 miles per hour.

LODGING ALLOWANCE.

That lodging away from home be abolished ; but if through unforeseen circumstances such is impossible, each man shall have at least 9 hours, but not more than 12 hours, off duty away from home, and also receive the following allowances :—

If lodged at the Company's expense at a suitable hotel, 4s. per day.

If men provide their own accommodation, 10s. 6d. per day.

Men not to be lodged in places where quietness and cleanliness is not maintained, and private lodgings as at present existing to be abolished.

All cases where men are booked off more than nine hours, the men to be paid at the same rate per day as if they were on duty.

HOLIDAYS.

14 days' holiday, with pay, to be allowed to each man after 12 months service.

MEAL TIMES.

That all duties shall be so arranged that a minimum of 30 minutes shall be allowed for the partaking of food between the 3rd and 5th hour of booking on duty, without loss of pay.

CLOTHING.

That three suits of combination overalls be supplied and laundered at the expense of the Railway Management, one top coat, one reefer jacket, and two caps to be supplied. These to be supplied annually.

ILL-HEALTH AND RETIREMENT.

Enginemen, Motormen, Firemen, and Electric Trainmen who, from ill-health or defective eyesight brought about by their employment, are taken off the footplate, shall be retained in the Company's employment, and be paid not less than the rate of pay they were receiving when taken off the footplate.

All Footplatemen and Motormen shall be compelled to retire from their work after 35 years service, and shall receive not less than two-thirds of their wages as a pension on retirement.

That all rights, privileges, customs, practices, and conditions not affected by the aforementioned wages and conditions shall remain in force as heretofore.

Monday, March 24th, saw the final conference in the renewed negotiations between our representatives, Sir Albert Stanley, and the Railway Executive. The interpretation of the Government's offer had been decided, and to that extent an agreement was reached.

The representatives of the National Union of Railwaymen and the Associated Society of Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen again met Sir Albert Stanley (President of the Board of Trade) and the Railway Executive at the Board of Trade. Sir Auckland Geddes and Sir Robert Horne (Minister of Labour) were also present.

At the conclusion of the conference, after seven o'clock, Mr. Bromley said: "A general agreement has been reached. It is not a final settlement; it is only an understanding so far as we have gone. I am more satisfied to-night with the progress that has been made than I have been hitherto all through the negotiations, as we have at last arrived at something tangible.

"If the same spirit is kept up during future negotiations as has predominated during the last few days, I am convinced that a final amicable settlement will be arrived at. I think, from the assurances that have been given us by the representatives of the Government, that our members will have nothing to fear from a little more patience. Personally, I feel that what has already been practically agreed upon, if ratified by the Executive Committee of my Society and the representatives of the other unions, should be immediately put into operation, so that the men could gain the benefit from it at once."

Sir Albert Stanley issued the following statement :—

At the meeting between representatives of the Government, the Railway Executive Committee, and the Railway Unions, the whole of the concessions offered by the Government were reviewed, and agreed interpretations arrived at.

These terms now await ratification by the two unions. If ratified, it is agreed that the negotiations on the remaining items in the programme shall be continued at once, and the Government undertake that every effort will be made to secure a fair and speedy settlement of those items. The following are the agreed interpretations above referred to :—

(1) **GUARANTEED WEEK.**—The standard week's work to consist of 48 hours. The standard week's wages, exclusive of any payment for overtime or Sunday duty, to be guaranteed to all employees who are available for duty throughout the week. But turns commencing and finishing on Sunday shall form part of the guaranteed week.

In the event of a strike affecting the work of any grade, either generally or in any district, the question of suspending the operation of this article shall be referred to the General Committee to be set up under Article 7 of this memorandum.

GUARANTEED DAY.—This to be further discussed.

(2) **OVERTIME.**—All time worked on weekdays in excess of the standard hours to be paid for at the rate of time and a quarter, each day to stand by itself for overtime purposes.

(3) **SUNDAY DUTY.**—(Twelve o'clock midnight Saturday to twelve midnight Sunday). Time and a half, without addition to rate for overtime or night duty, the same to apply to Christmas Day and Good Friday. Hours worked on these days in excess of the standard number of hours shall not be computed as part of the hours of work of any other day.

(4) **NIGHT DUTY (Weekdays).**—(a) All ordinary time worked between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. to be paid for at the rate of time and a quarter; (b) all overtime worked between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. to be paid at an inclusive rate of time and a half.

(5) **REST.**—In all regular duties a period of twelve hours rest to be shown on the rosters at the home station, but in other cases a minimum of nine hours.

(6) **HOLIDAYS.**—One week's holiday with pay after twelve months service, to include all casual employees who are regularly employed,

without prejudice to those men who already have a longer holiday under their existing conditions of service.

(7) **MANAGEMENT.**—The negotiating committees of the two unions will be recognised as the medium for dealing with all questions affecting rates of pay and conditions of service while the present negotiations are proceeding. A committee shall be appointed to consider and report :—

1. As to the continuance or discontinuance of the Conciliation Boards, consisting of representatives of the Railway Executive Committee and the two unions, to deal with any questions that arise in regard to rates of pay and conditions of service of the men within the conciliation grades, as from the day when these negotiations are concluded and the time until some final arrangement is arrived at in regard to the future position of railways.

2. As to the continuance or discontinuance of the existing Conciliation Boards. When the new Ministry of Ways and Communications is set up, it is the intention of the Government to provide an organisation for and to avail itself fully of the advantages of assistance, co-operation and advice from, the workers in the transportation industry.

(8) The present wages to be stabilised until December 31st, 1919, and any reduction of the War Wages under the agreement of November, 1918, to be waived.

With regard to standardisation of rates of pay and the removal of present anomalies, this can be dealt with only in connection with a revision of permanent wages, and, therefore, it is proposed that the present negotiations shall be continued for fixing new standard rates, so as to insure that all men throughout the country shall receive the same payment for the same work under the same conditions.

This will involve a transfer of a part of the War Wages to the Permanent Wage, but the Government agrees that up to December 31st, 1919, no man shall receive less in weekly rate of wage, plus war wage, than he is receiving at present, while anyone to whom the new war wage and new rate yields more than they are receiving at present shall receive the advantage as soon as an arrangement is arrived at.

At the end of the year the whole situation will be reviewed. The war wage will have to be looked at in the light of the circumstances of the time generally, and it will be open to the men to ask for a revision of the new standard rates if they think a case can be made for it, but the anomalies of varying pay for similar work under similar conditions will

have been removed, and future negotiations will be rendered much easier through there being only one set of figures to work upon.

(9) OTHER ITEMS IN THE PROGRAMMES.—These to be discussed at further meetings.

On March 26th the General Secretary reviewed the position in the following terms :—

“ We have now reached agreement on the following side issues, and the agreed improvements will be at once put into effect for the benefit of our members without waiting for the general settlement :—

- 1.—Guaranteed Week, exclusive of a Sunday booking.
- 2.—Overtime at time and a quarter, each day to stand by itself.
- 3.—Time and a half for Sunday duty (midnight Saturday to midnight Sunday).
- 4.—Night duty at time and a quarter for hours worked between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., overtime between these hours at time and a half.
- 5.—One Week's Holiday with pay after 12 months service, without prejudice to those already enjoying a longer holiday.
- 6.—12 hours rest between booked turns of duty, with a minimum of 9 hours in other cases.

“ We have obtained an understanding that some arrangement may in future be made towards the men having a voice in management, but as yet it is all very vague and nebulous.”

Thus by the end of March very material concessions had been won. I fear it would be ancient history now to reprint the very able negotiating points and speeches advanced by all the Society's representatives. The result was the greatest compliment to their service, for each one of them won their place in railway history by it.

CHAPTER XXII

Change from War Conditions—The Coal Commission—The Ministry of Transport—Railway War Records—Society and the N.U.R.—Reinstatement on the G.N.R.—North Eastern Strike—Two New Organisers—Victimised Police—A Wage Agreement at Last.

BEFORE plunging into the second phase of the negotiations which made 1919 a landmark in the history of the Society, it should be noted that the transfer from a war to a peace footing was affecting life for the better at every turn. No longer were we warned to lower the blinds, and to hide all light by night, and to be on guard about saying anything to anybody else. The nerve-racking terror of air raids had gone, and there was even a prospect of better bread soon, although butter was but a memory of long ago. The year 1919 saw some re-introduction of the old railway facilities, which had been gradually narrowed down from 1916 onwards. Express trains were decelerated in that year, and restaurant cars withdrawn, and 1917 saw even more drastic changes, including a restriction of luggage, an increase of fares—a withdrawal of cheap fares and an increase of fifty per cent. in ordinary fares—a reduced service, the closing down of many stations and halts, and the entire withdrawal of some train services. We had become familiar with the presence of women gate-keepers, porters, guards, carriage and engine cleaners, and even ticket inspectors. When in 1919 there came a mighty release of men, new light and life came, albeit England in 1921 was still only a sorry comparison to its former self.



The General Secretary's Room at Head Office.

Concurrently with the national negotiations for railwaymen the Coal Commission was sitting, making astounding disclosures every day from the King's Robing Room ! The former system of private control of minerals was unanimously condemned by Mr. Justice Sankey and all the members. Sir John Sankey's interim report recommended a seven hour day from July 16th, 1919, and, subject to the economic position, a six hour day from July 13th, 1921, with an advance in wages of 2s. and 1s. to men and boys respectively. It proceeded : " Even upon the evidence already given, the present system of ownership and working in the coal industry stands condemned, and some other system must be substituted for it, either nationalisation or a method of unification by national purchase or by joint control. It is in the interests of the country that the colliery worker shall have an effective voice in the direction of the mine."

On March 17th, Sir Eric Geddes brought before the House of Commons his Ministry of Transport Bill, which set the world of privilege by the ears. " This is a cold bath the country has got to take," he said, as he exposed the waste, inefficiency and duplication of the existing railway service. A House full of railway directors and shareholders shuddered, for it came bang upon the disclosures being made from the Coal Commission, and formed another weapon against the old order. Sir Eric Geddes expounded on the great advantages of a unified and well-organised railway service, of the future development of agriculture, industry, and housing, and even of a share in the management by the organised railway workers. Mines and railways seemed to be advancing on parallel lines into freedom from the old suppression by monopoly, and a storm arose which is not settled yet, although Sir Eric Geddes was mild as milk by comparison with the proposals of Mr. Bromley and this Society. To distract public attention from these subjects, there were daily and horrible stories, accompanied by faked pictures and gruesome drawings made in London, of Bolshevik atrocities in Russia. "Twas bright to be alive.

There were very serious upheavals in London, Glasgow, Belfast,

and Dublin. The Railway Clerks' Association secured recognition on February 4th, the very eve of their projected national strike, as the organisation for stationmasters, agents, supervisory and clerical staffs generally. It was a signal conquest for a right long refused, and it brought the R.C.A. forward at once as a very powerful adjunct to railway trade unionism, and a valued ally to the A.S.L.E. & F. in many projects. Clerks, so long neglected, are a vital essential to any sort of industry, and none can run without them. We could no more run the railways for a single hour without clerks than we could produce a newspaper without journalists. Therefore, 1919 was a memorable year for the R.C.A., which in 1921 has embarked with us upon legislative enterprises referred to later.

Some remarkable facts demonstrating the extent of the railways' war work were given by Sir Herbert Walker before the Select Committee on Transport. Sir Herbert was the acting Chairman of the Railway Executive Committee, and General Manager of the London and South Western Railway.

"The mileage of the railway undertakings taken over by the Government," Sir Herbert said, "is 121,331; the mileage of the lines not taken over is only 499. Last year about £35,000,000 worth of traffic was carried for the Government—about two-thirds goods and one-third passenger traffic. At the end of 1916, when the railway companies were called upon to send 300 locomotives to France, passenger services had to be drastically curtailed, and the surcharge of 50 per cent. was put on all ordinary fares with the object of discouraging travel. This 50 per cent. increase," Sir Herbert added, "did have an appreciable effect in 1917, especially in the early part of the year.

"Unfortunately," he added, "owing no doubt to high wages that are being earned throughout the country, we have had to carry more passengers this year than ever before. The total of the passenger receipts on the L. & S.W. Railway in August this year, for instance, were £160,000 more than in the previous August.

"More than 30,000 railway-owned wagons and a large number of private wagons were sent to various theatres of war.

“ Altogether, British Railways sent no fewer than 700 locomotives to France, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Salonika, and other parts of the front from a total stock of 22,000 engines. Meanwhile they had difficulty in repairing their locomotives and wagons at home owing to lack of labour and materials. At the present moment the railways are working their goods traffic with about 80,000 wagons fewer than in 1913.”

Sir Herbert said that in October the staff of the railways was about 17,000 less than in 1913, and yet accidents had decreased.

Up to October the railways had released 180,796 of their men for service in the forces, equal to about 30 per cent. of their employees. Special railway units dealing with military railway construction and operation took 24,176 of these men.

A White Paper issued by Sir Auckland Geddes for the Board of Trade gave some results of Government control of railways during the war. It had been commonly stated that the systems were operated at a heavy loss, but that was because the immense military traffic was not charged as revenue. With such traffic charges very substantial profits have been made—up to £55,000,000 in 1917.

Sir Albert Wyon and Sir William Plender have prepared a statement showing the value of the Government traffic if charged for at authorised pre-war rates during the period from August 5th, 1914, to December 31st, 1918, as follows :—

Year	Government Traffic.			
	£			
1914 (part of)	-	-	-	3,500,000
1915	-	-	-	10,279,104
1916	-	-	-	20,649,126
1917	-	-	-	35,698,554
1918	-	-	-	41,917,024
Total				112,043,808

These figures are in respect of railway transit only. “ The railway companies have performed a number of additional services

by means of steamboats, docks, canals, etc., for which no charges have been raised." The value of these are estimated roughly at from £10,000,000 to £15,000,000.

BIG BALANCES.

Taking into account the value of the Government traffic as given in the above table, the total receipts and expenditure, with the balance earned in 1913 and the period under control, have been as follows:—

Year.	Receipts. £		Expenditure £		Balance. £
1913	118,700,935	...	75,127,210	...	43,573,725
1914 (part of)	47,918,188	...	31,782,832	...	16,135,356
1915	130,358,044	...	85,028,262	...	45,328,782
1916	145,871,085	...	95,756,706	...	50,114,379
1917	164,279,430	...	108,877,932	...	55,401,498
1918	177,584,321	...	131,326,295	...	46,258,026
Total control	666,011,068	...	452,772,027	...	213,239,041

In the period of control the total amount paid as compensation to the companies was £95,313,607, leaving a balance of earned income of £117,926,444, or £5,882,633 in excess of the estimated value of Government services at authorised pre-war rates.

The estimate submitted by Sir Auckland Geddes gave the estimated increased cost for the year ending March 31st, 1920, compared with 1913, as follows:—

	£
War wage and other concessions - - -	57,000,000
Eight-hours day and new concessions - -	20/25,000,000
Extra cost of materials and coal - - -	27,000,000
Total extra - - -	104/109,000,000

There were other subjects of public discussion, too, like the Municipal Housing Schemes, the Peace Treaty of Versailles published on May 9th, and the disclosure of documents issued to

Army officers early in February about the willingness or otherwise of troops in the various areas to assist in strike-breaking. Some of the questions asked were :—

Will troops in various areas respond to orders for assistance to preserve the public peace ?

Will they assist in strike breaking ?

Will they parade for draft to overseas, especially to Russia ?

Whether there is any growth of Trade Unionism among them. The effect outside Trade Unions have on them.

Whether any agitation from internal or external sources is affecting them.

Whether any soldiers' councils have been formed.

Whether any demobilisation troubles are occurring.

The Peace Treaty, with its colossal indemnity, dealt a staggering blow to the trade and commerce of Europe, poverty and starvation being manifest in many countries, while the "Plenipotentiaries Extraordinary," familiarly known as the Big Five, talked of thousands of millions coming from some unknown source. The Treaty, however, contained an International Labour Covenant, under which all members of the League of Nations accepted :—(1) Right of association allowed "for all lawful purposes"; (2) Prohibition of labour for children under 14; (3) Right of all workers to wages adequate to maintain a "reasonable standard of life"; (4) Equal pay for equal work, irrespective of sex; (5) A weekly rest for all, including Sunday or its equivalent; (6) Eight-hour day or 48-hour week, with certain special exceptions; (7) Institution of a system of inspection to ensure enforcement of laws and regulations for workers' protection.

There had been, during the latter part of 1918 and during 1919, a better understanding between the N.U.R. and this Society, a very welcome fact. Mr. Thomas had spoken on Mr. Bromley's platform in his support during the North East Leeds contest, and in August of 1919 a circular which explains itself had been issued. It said :—

" You will be aware that for many years there has been a contest between the N.U.R. and ourselves on the great question of which Union could best represent the Locomotivemen, and round the great problem of Industrial *versus* Craft Unionism.

" During the last year or two the possibilities of Industrial Unionism have become smaller and smaller, for not only have Craft Unions either amalgamated on national lines, or are contemplating doing so, as witness the Engineers, Toolmakers, Pattern Makers, etc., but even unskilled Labour Unions have amalgamated. All this has cut clean across Union by Industry, and has increased on national lines Union by Crafts.

" A similar tendency has been operating in the railway industry, as witness the increased membership of Craft Unions in railway shops and works, the growth of the Railway Clerks to some 70,000, and our own phenomenal growth of from 32,900 at the end of 1914, to over 46,000 at the present day.

" Throughout all the misunderstandings of the past we have, as a Union, while claiming our identity and self-government, always proclaimed our readiness and even desire to work in the closest agreement with the other Railway Unions and, if necessary, with other organised workers. This has been proclaimed by our speakers on a thousand platforms, and now, in the height of our success, when we have by our power obtained the Eight Hour Day, and are hammering out a National Working Agreement for all our members, and enrolling members and opening branches most successfully, we are giving a proof of the honesty of our intentions to work in close harmony with others.

" We have, as you know, recently entered into a very close agreement for offensive and defensive action with the National and Provincial Union of Licensed Vehicle Workers. We have also recently been approached by another organisation on the subject of coming to an understanding, although of a less binding nature than that mentioned above. In addition to this, your Executive were recently approached by the National Union of Railwaymen with a view to the two Unions considering the future relations between us, and coming, if not to a working agreement, at least to an understanding.

" Your E.C., anxious to prove the *bona-fides* of our statement that we were willing to work with others, especially the N.U.R., although not prepared to consider the fusion of our Union with any, accepted the invitation, with the result that a meeting of the two Executives was held on June 5th, at which meeting, after mutual

expressions of goodwill, the following resolution was unanimously agreed to :—

“‘ That this joint meeting of the E.C.'s of the A.S.L.E. & F. and the N.U.R. hereby expresses its emphatic opinion that the social and economic conditions of the workers demand the greatest amount of industrial solidarity, consistent with the greatest freedom of the various sections within the Labour Movement. We therefore agree to consider the whole question of industrial organisation, with a view of linking up the Unions for future industrial and political action, as necessity may arise, as far as Railwaymen are concerned.’

“ It was also agreed that a Joint Committee should be set up, consisting of five members from each E.C., together with the two General Secretaries, to consider the best means of giving effect to the above resolution, and reporting to the Joint Executives. The Committee appointed from our side is Messrs. Cooke, Wild, Stevenson, Squance, and Jarman, and our members may rely on it that whatever scheme of joint working or sympathetic action and support is finally drafted, it will be submitted to the members for endorsement or otherwise.”

Negotiations over the National Agreement were resumed on April 9th, 10th, and 11th, in regard to meal-times and hours of labour, and on April 23rd, 24th, 25th and forward, in regard to Conciliation Boards, Clothing, Rest, Eyesight Failure, and Lodging Allowances, Sunday Time, etc. On May 1st the long discussion had advanced to new subjects, like holiday relief and pay, higher duties, and rates of daily pay. The Railway Executive submitted a revised offer, which appeared on the minutes of that day. They continued, until they broke into the week of the A.A.D. at Leeds, meetings being held in May. To that Conference the General Secretary tendered a lengthy and important review of progress made up to that time. Naturally, the Eyesight Test came into prominence, and Sir Herbert Walker advanced the suggestion that the Board of Trade should appoint somebody to hold an inquiry into the question, at which the Society could produce evidence.

Mr. Bromley : You mean to have a standard test throughout ?

Sir Herbert Walker : Yes.

Mr. Bromley : Yes. I agree to it, but we feel rather dubious

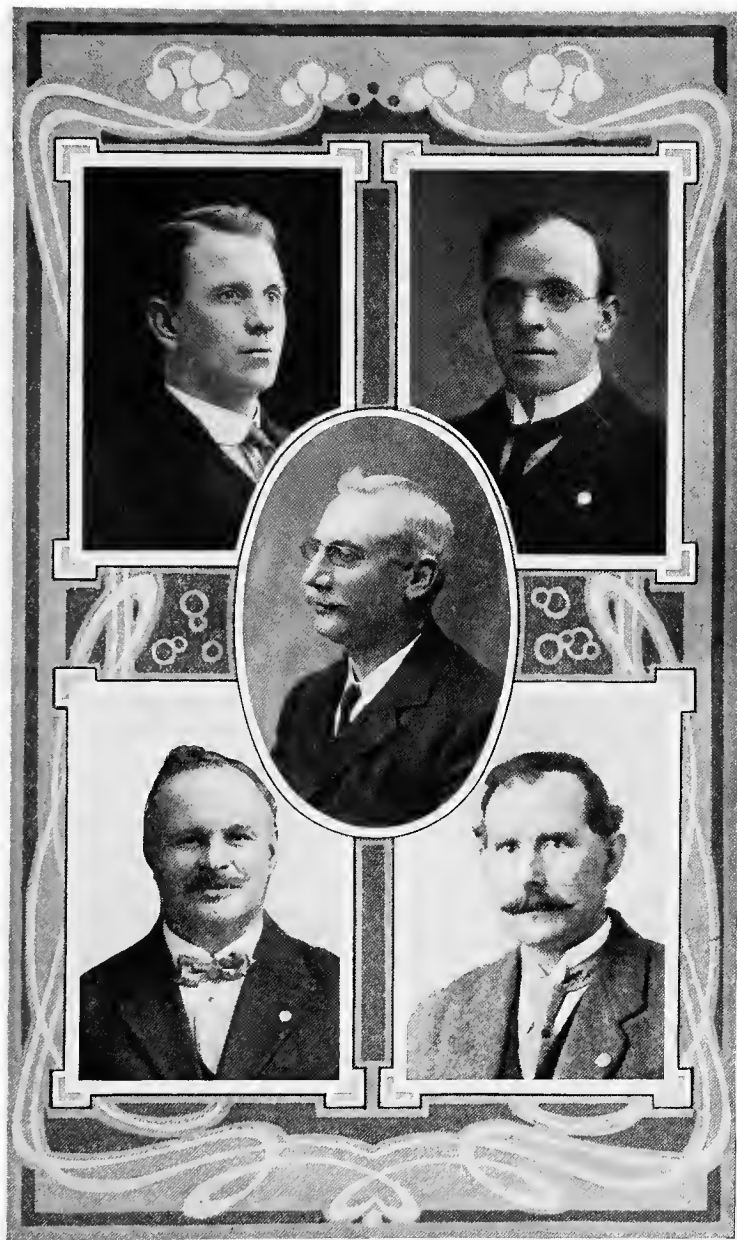
about the Board of Trade appointing practical men. I would prefer it to be a Committee drawn from the locomotive superintendents of the railways, with representatives of the men.

Sir Herbert Walker : In view of what took place at the commencement of the meeting, we have dealt with all your points.

Mr. Bromley : Except the great point of wages.

Wages and promotion, therefore, predominated during June, but Friday, July 11th, saw the Society on the eve of a very serious duel outside the Conference-room. The Great Northern Railway, despite the fact that men were needed and lines were clogged with traffic, would not reinstate those young men who had joined the forces without the permission of the Company. In June they grudgingly conceded the right of reinstatement, but without seniority, and the General Secretary advised all members to refuse anything short of full seniority. On July 11th the N.U.R. sent a wire as to their decision, and asked for a meeting of the two Executives. Arrangements were made to stop the system, when the G.N.R. gave way, under a letter of instruction from the Board of Trade. This ruling settled also the attitude of the Caledonian, which was copying the G.N.R.

Exactly seven days later, Friday, July 18th, events had reached a crisis on the North Eastern system, and the Company had the surprise of their lives. With automatic precision, Carlisle, Gateshead, Newcastle, Sunderland, York, Leeds and other centres followed each other with the adoption of a down tools policy, until the entire system was dislocated, and the North-East of England was isolated. Extraordinary scenes resulted. Rich people travelled from Leeds to Scarborough by aeroplane, and every available motor was seized, at prices up to £20 for the trip, to reach distant towns. But not all the aeroplanes and motors could dispense with the man on the footplate, and thousands of extra telegrams had to be sent. All this in a desperate effort to beat the men, an effort doomed to failure when men are solid. This dramatic example of how a great area can be isolated arose out of the dismissal of men who declined to submit to the Company's very harsh eyesight test, and the demand



Organizing Secretaries.

1. MR. J. SWEENEY. 2. MR. IVOR GREGORY. 3. MR. J. DRUMMOND, J.P.
4. MR. BARTON WILD. 5. MR. ARTHUR MASON.

for a National and just test. The men immediately concerned were goods men, but the passenger drivers and firemen joined in the fight, and shared the victory. The movement began, grew, and ended inside seven days.

The Executive Committee had hastily transferred to Newcastle to assist, and had to bear much inconvenience from lack of accommodation until a settlement was reached on Saturday, July 19th, when all the country was celebrating peace—the official Peace Day. The terms on which work was resumed were briefly as follows :—

- 1.—A National eyesight test will be established by the Government within a month (by August 21st), and by this test both sides agree to be bound.
- 2.—Examinations on eyesight to be postponed until after August 21st.
- 3.—The ten men suspended to be reinstated as from July 21st in their old positions and at their old rates.
- 4 —All men on strike to report for duty at once.

Messrs. Parfitt and Warwick retired as organisers under the age limit in 1919, and the election of their successors caused considerable interest. Mr. Barton Wild, of Ardsley, with 9,600 votes, and Mr. J. Sweeney, of Newport, with 8,954 votes, were elected as their successors, to commence their duties on and from November 3rd. The total number of votes recorded for the eight candidates in that election was 27,089.

An agreement was drawn up and signed, pending the approval of the 1920 A.A.D., with the National Foremen's Association (Engineering and Allied Trades), under which the two parties undertook to observe strict neutrality, and for none of their members to undertake any duties of the other's members, in the event of either side having an officially recognised dispute with any railway company.

In May a Police Bill had been introduced which constituted a direct attack upon their organisation, and in London, Manchester, and Liverpool some thousands of policemen struck, being members of the Police and Prison Officers' Union. The Executive of the

Society sent a wire to the N.U.R. suggesting a joint meeting to take steps to support the victimised police, for those who struck were not reinstated, and another wire was sent to the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. advising support for the police, even to the extent of industrial action. The Executive met the N.U.R., and then meeting separately they reported a similar conclusion, that owing to the meagre support given by the members of the Police Union to their colleagues, they could not call out their members. Meantime, a sympathetic strike of our members had begun at Nine Elms and Stockwell, and the Tube men were anxious for instructions. All were instructed to return to work at once. The Yorkshire miners' strike caused a suspension of the guaranteed week clause, and members losing time through it were paid benefit according to rule.

The Board of Trade invited the Society to appoint one representative to an Eyesight Test Committee being formed, and after a resolution of protest, an additional representative was conceded. It was decided to recall the 1919 A.A.D. during October, to formulate the National Programme previously quoted, for presentation to the Railway Executive. An increase of contributions by twopence weekly was also recommended to branches, in view of the re-consideration of salaries and wages paid to officials, staff, and organizers. Branches were therefore invited to send in amendments to rules by October 6th, in accordance with the Special Conference agenda.

Quieter, but more important than all this, there continued the tide of negotiations with the Railway Executive. On July 30th an improved standard of wages and conditions was offered, which Sir H. Walker described as absolutely their final offer, and he was informed at once that it was not acceptable. It was then decided to approach the War Cabinet with a view to further raising the standard rates of wages and reducing the period of years between advances. On the same day a letter was sent to Mr. Lloyd George to that effect:—

“The reason for this request is that after some months' negotiation my Executive have to-day received from the Railway

Executive Committee their final word and offer on wages increase for drivers, motormen, firemen, and cleaners, and as the amounts of increase offered are nothing approaching the demands of the Society, and the feelings of our members in the country are intense, my Executive feel it to be their duty to lay the case before the Cabinet as a final effort before laying the whole position before our members."

The uncertainty dragged on, until on August 13th the following statement was made :—

"As an Executive Committee we have made every effort to facilitate a settlement, but with very poor results. We find ourselves up against a most unsatisfactory position, brought about by procrastination on the part of the Government in dealing with the matter."

On August 20th, after prolonged negotiations, the Executive received a further offer from the Government on wages, which they decided to recommend the members to accept as a standardisation of all wages throughout the country :—

DRIVERS AND MOTORMEN.

1st and 2nd years	-	-	-	-	12s. per day.
3rd and 4th years	-	-	-	-	13s. "
5th, 6th and 7th years	-	-	-	-	14s. "
8th year and afterwards	-	-	-	-	15s. "

FIREMEN.

1st and 2nd years	-	-	-	-	9s. 6d. per day.
3rd and 4th years	-	-	-	-	10s. 6d. "
5th year and afterwards	-	-	-	-	11s. "

The above to include all War Wage.

Age in Years— CLEANERS.

16 and under	-	-	-	-	4s. per day.
17 "	-	-	-	-	5s. "
18 and 19	-	-	-	-	6s. "
20 and over	-	-	-	-	7s. "

This to come into operation as from August 18th.

Retribution came hot foot upon the Government for its long procrastination and nearness in making a bargain. Within six weeks of the settlement just quoted coming into operation, all systems were standing absolutely still. The National Strike of 1919 forms the first part of the following chapter, there remaining a few other matters to clear up in this remarkable year 1919. Mr. Bromley was nominated and accepted as prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the Attercliffe Division of Sheffield, in succession to the late Mr. W. C. Anderson, M.P. Mr. D. S. Humphreys, of Mexborough, who had presided at several A.A.D.'s, and Mr. R. T. Mackereth, the indefatigable Secretary of York No. 1, were elected to the Executive Committee, and several matters arising out of misinterpretation of the recent agreements called for special meetings with the R.E.C. A meeting had been held at Euston Station on Tuesday, August 26th, which arrived at agreed interpretations of the recent agreements, the Society being represented by Messrs. Worthy Cooke and W. A. Stevenson. The National Programme was fashioned by the October Special Conference, to contain the following :—

Six hours to constitute a day.

Sunday Duty : Double time from 12 noon Saturday to 7 a.m. Monday.

Night Duty : Time and a half from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Double time to be paid for overtime between those hours.

Good Friday, Christmas Day, and all Bank and Labour Holidays to be paid for at double time. For Scotland, January 1st and 2nd to be substituted for Christmas Day and Good Friday.

Overtime : All overtime to be paid for at double time.

Guaranteed day for each time of signing on, or for availability.

Guaranteed Week, exclusive of Sunday duty.

Rest : Twelve hours at home station, or nine hours away from home, between each turn of duty, except in regard to race and excursion trains.

Wages : Enginemen and electric motormen, 20s. per day (to suffer no reduction if reduced to firemen or electric trainmen). Firemen, assistant electric drivers and electric trainmen, 15s. per day. (If not promoted to driver or motorman after ten years service, to be paid the driver's or motorman's scale of pay ; if reduced to cleaners or gatemen, to suffer no reduction). Cleaners and electric train gatemen, 10s. per day. When engaged on higher duties, to be paid on the scale applicable to those duties. Each turn of such duty to be recorded, and after completing 313 turns as such, or 10 years in the service, to be paid on the higher duty scale.

Rent Allowance : 7s. 6d. per week special rent allowance to be granted to all men.

Mileage Rates : On express passenger trains, 100 miles to be paid for as one day ; for slow passenger trains and goods trains, 80 miles to be paid as one day. All mileage in excess to be paid at the rate of 10 miles per hour for express, and 8 miles per hour for slow passenger and goods trains.

Lodging away from home to be abolished, but if such is impossible, if lodged at the company's expense at a suitable hotel, 4s. per day. If men provide their own accommodation, 10s. 6d. per day. Private lodgings as at present existing to be abolished.

Holidays : Fourteen days holiday to be allowed annually, with full pay, after six months service, one extra day to be allowed for each Bank Holiday worked. Six free passes to be available annually, to any part of the United Kingdom, to the men, their wives, and families.

Meal Times : All duties shall be so arranged that a minimum of 30 minutes shall be allowed for taking food between the 3rd and 4th hour of booking on duty, without loss of pay. Suitable accommodation to be provided to partake of food.

Clothing : Three suits of combination overalls, or jackets and trousers, as preferred, be supplied, and laundered at the expense of the railway management. One top-coat, one

reefer jacket, one serge jacket, two caps and two pairs of boots annually.

The provisions as to ill-health, defective eyesight, retirement, and special duties, were preserved, with the additions that loco. foremen should be selected from drivers ; that all engine cabs should be standardised ; that a committee of the Society should supervise all engines for that purpose ; that enginemen be supplied with watches, repairable at the company's expense ; that split duties be abolished, and that men shall live where they choose. The programme approved by the 1919 Conference was indeed bold and comprehensive.

Such is the post-war programme of the Society for its members. Now, however, we must turn to the story of the greatest railway strike on record, that of September, 1919.

CHAPTER XXIII

Standardisation—A National Strike—Nine Days Wonder—Solidarity and Victory—Many Congratulations—Rapid Growth—Railway Control—The Ministry of Transport—Zonal System—Joint Control—The Society Promotes a Bill.

TO fully understand the cause of the strike it is necessary first to quote the following passage from the statement of the Government at the close of the March negotiations. This statement, it was noticed at the time, did not appear in the Board of Trade announcement of the terms :—

"Wages and Standard Rates of Pay.—The present wages to be stabilised till December 31st, 1919, and any reduction of the War Wage under the agreement of November, 1918, to be waived.

"As regards standardisation of rates of pay and removal of present anomalies, this can only be dealt with in connection with a general revision of permanent wages, and, therefore, it is proposed that the present negotiations shall be continued for fixing new standard rates, so as to ensure that all men throughout the country shall receive the same payment for the same work under the same conditions.

"This will involve reduction of the War Wage, but the Government are prepared to agree that up to December 31st no man shall receive less in weekly rate of wages, plus War Wage, than he is receiving at present, while anyone to whom the new War Wage and new rate yield more than they are receiving at present, shall receive the advantage as soon as an arrangement is arrived at.

“ At the end of the year the whole situation will be reviewed. The War Wage will have to be looked at in the light of the then cost of living, and the circumstances of the time generally, and it will be open to the men to ask for a revision of the new standard rates (i.e., a further transfer from War Wage to permanent rate) if they think a case can be made for it. But the anomalies of varying pay for similar work, under similar conditions, will have been removed, and future negotiations will be rendered much easier through there being only one set of figures to work upon.”

Certain agreed interpretations of this agreement had been arrived at in August, but throughout the month of September Mr. Thomas had found it impossible to induce the Government to recognise the principle of standardisation upwards for all the grades in the N.U.R., as had been conceded in the case of the A.S.L.E. & F. There was talk about getting the wage level down, and of elaborate preparations by the Government during many past months for a strike.

In a statement issued to the public on Tuesday, September 21st, Mr. Thomas said :—

“ The position, in my opinion, is so serious and the danger so imminent that I would be wanting in my duty to the public, the Government, and our members in the country, if I did not frankly say that we are rapidly approaching a crisis.

“ It will be remembered that following the settlement of February, when the existing War Wage was being considered, an agreement was arrived at which stabilised the existing wage until December, with a proviso that would enable both sides to negotiate a basis of standardisation for all grades. It will be obvious from our side—and, indeed, it was fully recognised by the Government in the interviews we had—that the basis would be in an upward direction.

“ Long and protracted negotiations have taken place. A settlement was arrived at in our locomotive section, which did recognise this principle, but to our amazement the proposals for the whole of the other grades, which are now before us, reverse this policy.



Joint Strike Committee, A.S.L.E. & F. and N.U.R., National Railway Strike, 1919.

"This means that the basis of standardisation makes no allowance for the position of those who have higher pay than the others, and if the existing agreement for the war wage to terminate in December came into operation, this would mean an actual reduction of varying amounts up to as much as 14s. per week in some grades."

The Executive Committee of the A.S.L.E. & F. was in London at the time, dealing with the Eyesight Test and other matters. Full consideration was given to the serious position arising between the N.U.R. and the Government. It was frankly impossible to allow the Government to rely upon our men to run the services against the struggle of the N.U.R. for fair conditions. The honourable course seemed to be that of full support, and if the N.U.R. had to withdraw, then we felt we must withdraw too. Accordingly a fraternal message was sent to Unity House, saying that :

"If you want help, we are standing by."

When the call was made on the Friday afternoon, September 26th. we telegraphed all centres, and the response was immediate and most effective.

The warning of the N.U.R. quoted above was followed almost immediately by an ultimatum to the Government from the National Executive of the N.U.R., asking for a favourable reply within twenty-four hours if a crisis was to be avoided. The reply was a "definitive" offer, interpreted rightly as a final offer, signed by Sir Auckland Geddes.

Its terms were not acceptable, and conferences with the Board of Trade and with the Prime Minister at Downing Street followed. All the efforts failed to yield an improvement, and at 3 p.m. on Friday, September 26th, the negotiations came to an end.

The deadlock occurred because it was found impossible to bridge the gap between the standard rates asked for by the N.U.R. and the rates offered by the Government. The Executive could not accept as an alternative basis of negotiation the possibility of continuing a portion of the War Wage after December 31st. Their demand

was for new permanent rates which would be virtually on the level of the existing earnings without overtime—that is the old standard rates, plus 33s. War Wage.

On September 19th the first proposals arrived, which did not give effect in any shape or form to the principle conceded in the case of the drivers and the firemen, and in the letter accompanying it Sir Auckland Geddes said :—

“ I trust your Executive will realise that this will be a very heavy burden for the railways of this country to stand, and I therefore wish you to understand that the proposals contained in the attached memoranda are not put forward as a basis of negotiations, but as the definitive offer of the Government.”

In his immediate reply to this letter, Mr. Thomas said the terms proposed could not form the basis of a satisfactory settlement. On September 23rd, other proposals were submitted, but again they did not concede the principle applied to locomotivemen.

The Cabinet had for weeks been quietly preparing its plans for such an event. A full Cabinet meeting was immediately held, attended by Earl Haig, Major-General Fielding, the Minister of Food, the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Transport, the Minister of War, and others. All military leave and demobilisation was suspended, and armed protection was guaranteed for the running of trains. The Food Ministry imposed the strict rationing of meat, bacon, and margarine, the sugar ration was reduced by half, hoarding beyond one week's supplies was made illegal, and the public meals allowance revised. It was arranged to commandeer motor and horse-drawn vehicles as required, and Hyde Park, London, was at once transformed into a huge garage.

There was an enormous gathering of railwaymen of both societies at the Mass Meeting held in the Royal Albert Hall on the first night of the strike. Mr. Cramp presided, and detailed statements were presented by Messrs. Thomas and Bromley. In the course of his address, Mr. Bromley said :—

“ We have just made, in conjunction with the N.U.R., a settle-

ment for the members we represented, not a satisfactory one, but with our general spirit of sweet compromise—one which we had accepted as a temporary agreement. Therefore, as you will all know, that is the last likely moment for any body of men to step into a new movement when they had just completed an agreement; and I will say to this meeting, and again through the Press to the public, that had the demands of the N.U.R. been exorbitant or unfair, we should not have backed them in their demand. Again, my Executive, recognising we are custodians of the welfare of our members, the instruments through which their desires are given effect to, whatever may have been our individual opinion, would not have backed the N.U.R. in this movement had we thought it a political or an incipient revolution. That statement is due to the members we represent who, not all, hold the same opinion that some of my colleagues on my Executive do.

“ When we arrived in London on Tuesday evening, we had not the slightest knowledge of the trouble of the N.U.R., other than to know that there was bound to be a desire to follow on the same lines a settlement for all grades of railwaymen as had been made for locomotivemen. So when we were informed of the position, what did we do? We did not rush blindly into it because it was a fight, we sent for Mr. Thomas, and after having a preliminary conversation, giving us the facts, we said, let us see if your claims are justifiable claims. Let us see if the answer of the Government is reasonable, and shows a desire to meet these claims or otherwise. On Thursday morning we had the whole position before us, and I will promise you, Mr. Chairman, our support to the N.U.R. of our fellow trade unionists, and, after all, blood is thicker than water. But even with that position, had the case been an unfair one I will say we should not be in it, and we should not be here to-night in supporting you. But we find, after analysing the whole of the figures, that the request which was made for other grades of railwaymen was not only a reasonable request, but in our opinion was a moderate request, and the reply given by the Government was not sufficient, not fair recognition of the services given to this great nation by railwaymen, or anything like sufficient to meet the increased cost of living which railwaymen had to bear. Our members are solid.

“ Therefore, friends, what was our duty, not to remember past differences, not to find loopholes through which to escape from the battle, our duty was to realise the human ethics of trade unions, and to say whether these people are fellow-railwaymen or whether they are not. If a fair, just, and honourable claim was to be met in no

better method than this, then our duty was to be alongside of them in the battle. So, friends, we are here, and I want to say this, with the short notice at our disposal, with the hurried nature of the call we had to give to our members, although many of the wires which I sent yesterday afternoon had not reached our branches by mid-day to-day, the fact that our members had seen in the Press their Executive was backing the N.U.R., and the loyalty of our members to the Executive Committee, I am proud of the fact that from the North of Scotland to the South of England our members are solid in this battle. We are in the fight, not for a farthing for our members, not for any advantage to our members, not to benefit any of our members, we are in it to help the N.U.R. on a trade union principle. I, again, on behalf of my organisation, give this pledge to the meeting, and, through this meeting to the railwaymen of the country, that we shall in no way block any settlement; in no way make difficult the work of those who have to conduct this meeting by rejecting anything on our behalf."

When the Government withheld the wages previously earned by the men as an attempt to reduce them to surrender, strong feeling was aroused throughout the country.

Sir Eric Geddes and Sir Robert Horne were subjected to an extremely hostile demonstration by a large crowd in Whitehall on Friday, October 3rd. When they reached Parliament Street the crowd became extremely hostile. People booed and hissed them as they proceeded across the street, escorted by four police officers. The crowd pressed round them, and for a time the incident looked ugly, but there was no molestation, and they proceeded across the road to Whitehall Gardens. After that, mounted escorts were used for the unpopular Ministers.

Great efforts were made by the anti-Labour authorities to run a skeleton service, but it was a complete and ghastly failure. Trains ran without passengers, trains ran which reached no destination but the jack-points, and "expresses" ran at ten miles an hour. The daily boasting in the Press of the "improved" service was a mighty attempt at deceit, but it seemed to deceive very few. On one occasion when a Pressman asked Mr. Bromley's opinion of the service which was running, Mr. Bromley said, "I will give them 500

of our best drivers on the top of their present service, and then beat them." The solidarity of all grades paralysed the nation, and taught the travelling public to respect the railway worker. The postal service was wiped out, and parcels post was entirely obliterated. The road transport service was totally inadequate, and all the dependence on this system proved a delusion. Thousands of gallons of milk went sour, and the food service came dangerously near a collapse.

The Government only just capitulated in time to save worse events. For weeks before it began the Government had been preparing elaborate alternative services by motor, instead of preparing a path of peace.

Day by day paralysis was creeping over the country, and the Government refusal to meet the men until they had returned to work was soon abandoned. A week-end fog exterminated the skeleton service, and the conferences of Sunday, October 5th, brought a happy settlement.

40s. turned to 51s. ; wages stabilised to September 30th, 1920 ; new scale to be negotiated by December 31st.

The final conference between the Trade Union deputation and the Government took place at Downing Street on Sunday, October 5th. It began at 11.30 a.m., and at 4.15 p.m. terms of settlement had been reached. There was quite a large gathering in the historic house, representing the Executives of the N.U.R. and the A.S.L.E. & F., and the intermediary conference of Trade Union leaders, including Mr. Henderson, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Brownlie, Mr. O'Grady, and many others. Then, too, there was the Cabinet, and many Government officials. Lunch was provided on the premises, and while Mr. Lloyd George was engaged with Mr. Thomas and Mr. Bromley, the rest repaired to the drawing-room. At 4.20 they began to emerge, and the news of a satisfactory settlement caused universal pleasure.

The terms were as follow :—

1.—Work to be resumed forthwith

- 2.—On the full resumption of work negotiations shall be continued, with the understanding that they will be concluded before December 31st, 1919.
- 3.—Wages will be stabilised in the United Kingdom at the present level up to September 30th, 1920. Any time after August 1st, 1920, they may be reviewed in the light of circumstances then existing.
- 4.—No adult railwayman in Great Britain shall receive less than 51s. so long as the cost of living is not less than 110 per cent. above pre-war level.
- 5.—The N.U.R. and the A.S.L.E. & F. agree that the men shall work harmoniously with the railway servants who have remained at or returned to work, and the Government and the N.U.R. and A.S.L.E. & F. agree that no man shall be prejudiced in any way as the result of the strike.
- 6.—The arrears of wages, which have been withheld in consequence of breach of contract, will be paid after the resumption of work.

A statement, signed by the Conciliation Committee of the Trade Union Conference, had been issued on Saturday, October 4th, which said :—

“ A situation of the utmost gravity has arisen in connection with the present railway crisis. Though we are still doing our utmost to keep open the door for negotiation, we feel that as responsible leaders we should be lacking in our duty if we omitted to state our view of the causes leading to the failure, for the present, of our efforts at conciliation.

“ The Conference, from which we derived authority to act as mediators, was unanimously of opinion that the Government's terms were not merely harsh, but such as no Union could accept. It considered that the spirit in which the Government had conducted the negotiations had indicated a desire to inflict punishment upon the Railway Unions for the policy that they had adopted in striking after prolonged negotiations.”

The bills to be paid by the Government would probably reach,

the "Daily Mail" said, about £1,000,000 a day. Included in this was the cost of an organisation which had been built up in reserve for many months, of petrol and other supplies for lorry services, of accumulating food stores, of troops' movements, of pay and rations of volunteer workers, and the extra money that would have to be provided for the guarantee of receipts to the railways under the war agreement.

Business men were inclined to place the total loss to the nation at about £50,000,000. The National Union of Railwaymen lost £300,000 of its funds issued as strike pay, as well as a large amount for propaganda and expenses.

Messages from various provincial centres showed that more than 335,000 workers other than railwaymen had been thrown out of employment by the strike.

Mr. Lloyd George, who had begun by calling the men conspirators and anarchists, ended by calling them into his drawing-room. The strike turned all England into a nine days' wonder. While the unions remained solid to a man, and the railway stations were closed and guarded, the roads witnessed a return to something like stage coach conditions, but with motors instead of horses. Leeds to London was a long, chilly, £3 3s. journey. Theatrical companies moved by charr-a-banc, or didn't move at all; newspapers organised motor delivery, and music hall artistes packed their trappings into all sorts of vehicles. There were motor expresses for fish and other food traffic, and for nine days there was much traffic and chaos on the roads. It was the most wonderful and certainly the most spectacular strike in history, and certainly it was most successful. The whole world of organised labour was paying tributes of admiration to the Society, which had begun the year by securing the standard eight hours day, and ended it by a thrilling exhibition of unselfish solidarity. Resolutions and letters of congratulation poured in from all quarters, possibly the most important being those I will quote from Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., the General Secretary of the N.U.R., and Mr. C. T. Cramp, who was then the President. Mr. Thomas wrote :—

UNITY HOUSE,

EUSTON ROAD, LONDON, N.W. 1.

13th October, 1919.

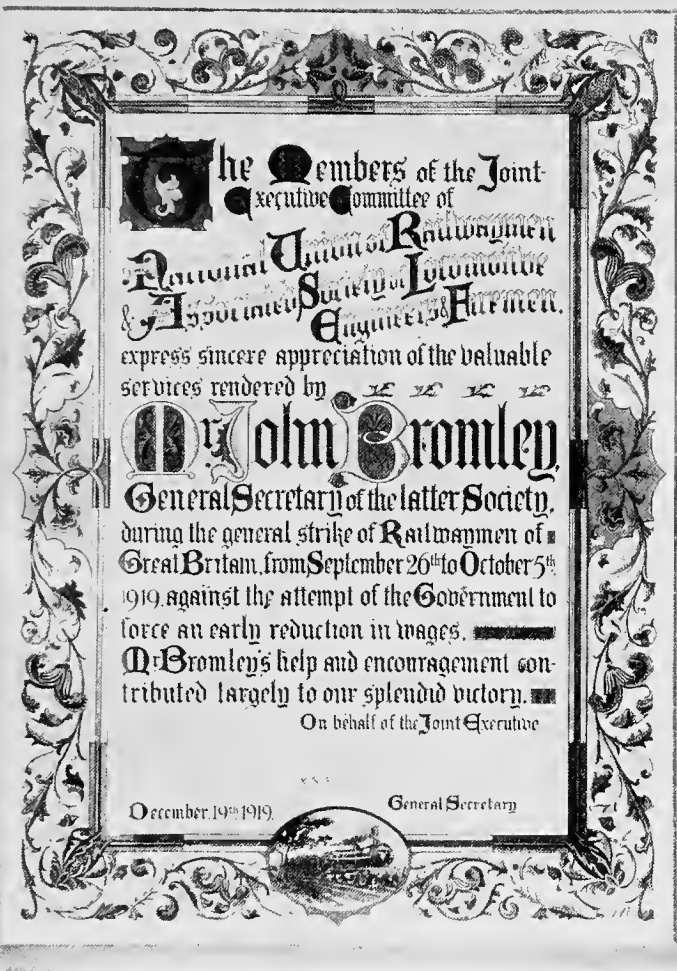
This being the first occasion on which I have ever addressed a message through the "Locomotive Journal," it is fitting that it should be to express my heartfelt and sincere thanks to every member of the A.S.L.E. & F. for the magnificent spirit of comradeship and loyalty displayed in the struggle through which we have just emerged so successfully.

The battle was not only for railwaymen. It was for Labour throughout the whole country, but it was the railwaymen who had to bear the brunt of the blow, and right well they did it. But to me, however, the outstanding feature was that, in spite of the differences between our Unions in the past, when the struggle came all these differences were swept aside, and only the principle was considered. I, as a locomotiveman, am proud of every driver, fireman, and cleaner in the country. They had nothing to gain in the fight, but everything to lose. Nothing can ever wipe the memory of this out, and it has certainly linked us closer than ever before.

Allow me also to congratulate your Executive Committee on the bold stand they took all through; although not involved, they never feared the result. Also, of your General Secretary, Mr. Bromley, I would say that he proved to myself a loyal partner, never once attempting to interfere, never once doubting the course taken, but always at my side, merely asking what he could do and how best it could be done. Just as you ought to be proud of your own part, it should also be some consolation to know that I am equally proud of you. That the other grades of the railway service will always appreciate your action, and if needs be show it in an equally practical manner, is the sincere belief and wish of

Yours fraternally,

J. H. THOMAS.



Illuminated Address presented to Mr. John Bromley by the Joint Executives at the close of the National Railway Strike, 1919.

Mr. Cramp wrote on October 10th :—

“Now we have emerged from the great struggle, and one can sit down to quietly review the events of the past few weeks, I desire to tender to yourself, your Executive Committee, and all the members of the A.S.L.E. & F., my very sincere gratitude for the splendid and unselfish assistance which you have rendered to the members of the N.U.R. throughout the crisis.

“Your members had no monetary advantage to gain—indeed, that was the position of every locomotiveman—but having satisfied yourselves that our claim was reasonable, and realising that a Trade Union principle was at stake, you came into the fight wholeheartedly, and helped us to win a great battle for the whole working-class of this country.

“It is true we differ as to forms and methods of Trade Union organisation, but bearing in mind that all such comparatively minor differences were swept aside when a real crisis arose, I venture to hope that our future relations may not only be free from the old bitterness, but that ultimately we may devise a means whereby perfect unity may be achieved without any violation of the deep-rooted convictions held by our respective memberships. Personally, I am prepared to do all I am able to accomplish this, and I am certain that I voice the overwhelming opinion of the members of the N.U.R. in this matter.

“Again let me thank you, and assure you that if ever the time arrives when your members are attacked in the same way as were many of ours by the recent proposals, you will find that the N.U.R. will not forget its duty to its allies of 1919.”

In expressing his thanks to the Executive and to all members for the magnificent response to the call made on September 26th, Mr. Bromley wrote :—

“It was inspiring to see our members from John o' Groats to Land's End come out at a call—of which they knew nothing but for the fact that they had a call—as one man. You have done something, comrades, almost, if not quite, unparalleled in the

history of British trade unionism, i.e., the absolute stoppage of a union which had just obtained a settlement for its members, in support of the members of another union who were likely to suffer a reduction. I would like to point out that the minimum wage of 40s. per week offered to other grades meant, with the present cost of living in comparison with pre-war prices, a wage of the value of about 17s. 6d. This could not be tolerated, and in the interests of all Labour our members were called upon to resent it."

The Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the Society showed the year to have been phenomenal from the membership and finance points of view also. The increase of income for the year was £19,700, and the year closed with funds of £199,650, although the Protection Fund showed a loss of £65,420 on account of the strike just described. There was an increase of 32 branches in the year, the total being 370, and the membership rose by 17,244, an amazing year's growth, to 57,184. This wave of new membership continued well during 1920, for in the first two months of that fortieth year of history 24 more branches were opened, and 2,469 new members enrolled, a rate of 300 per week !

There were significant increases, too, in the Provident Funds—£4,173 on Superannuation ; £2,605 on the Orphan Fund (notably due to the special effort) ; £3,154 on the Death Fund ; £9,530 on the Sick Fund ; and £397 on the Death and Retiring Fund. The strike expenditure totalled £68,268. The twopence weekly increase in contribution proved a timely help in breasting additional costs. The sales of the " Journal " increased by 10,000 copies monthly during the year, a sure and certain sign of good health, and yet, so abnormal were the costs involved, that the increased sale only increased the loss. That is the summary in figures of a wonderful year, a fitting climax to this record. It saw not only the eight hours day, but the abolition of classification, the National Standardisation of Wages, and the raising of conditions of service to a higher level than had ever hitherto been known. It was a very great year, and

the annual report, instead of being a single leaf as in 1880, extended to 103 pages of closely printed matter.

About the year 1920 I must be very brief, for the story has lured me away over time and space until I must shut off steam and pull the brakes hard over, ready for the arrival home. The year opened amid considerable discussion of the new scheme of railway control, propounded by Sir Eric Geddes in the House of Commons early in December of 1919. The Ministry of Transport had been established in August, after four months of discussion, and the new scheme set up a Central Board, a National Wages Board, and a Railway Advisory Committee. It had been agreed that failing agreement on matters of wages and conditions by the Central Board, the subject in dispute should be referred to the National Wages Board, consisting of four railway managers, four railway workers' representatives, and four users of railways, including representatives of the Trade Union Congress and the Co-operative movement. The following formed the first Railway Advisory Committee:— Mr. A. Adlington, G.W.R.; Mr. J. Bromley, A.S.L.E. & F.; Sir Alex. Kaye-Butterworth, N.E.R.; Mr. C. T. Cramp, N.U.R.; Mr. C. H. Dent, G.N.R.; Sir Francis Dent, S.E. & C. Rly.; Sir Sam Fay, G.C.R.; Sir Wm. Forbes, L.B. & S.C.; Mr. D. A. Matheson, Caledonian Rly.; Mr. F. Tatlow, Midland Rly.; Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas, M.P., N.U.R.; Sir Henry Thornton, G.E.R.; Mr. A. G. Walkden, Railway Clerks; Sir Herbert Walker, L. & S.W. Rly.; Mr. Arthur Watson, L. & Y.; Sir Thomas Williams, L. & N.W.

Sir Eric Geddes further explained that local committees, to which matters purely local, and other than of national importance, could be referred, would be set up. The third point forming the subject of conversation with the railwaymen or their representatives was in connection with the control exercised under the Ministry of Transport Act. The Railway Executive Committee, as such, would cease to exist probably on January 1st, and an Advisory Committee would be set up, which would consist of 12 General Managers and four representatives of the workers. The agreement precluded

lightning strikes on the railways, and the Executive Committee agreed to accept the machinery, subject to satisfactory local or district Boards being set up.

Then, on June 24th, 1920, Sir Eric Geddes again outlined the future policy of the Ministry, and announced the proposed Zonal system, or division into groups, as follows :—

- 1.—Southern, combining the South Eastern & Chatham, the Brighton, and the South Western.
- 2.—Western, the present Great Western system, with the Welsh lines.
- 3.—North Western, combining the North Western, the Midland, and the Lancashire & Yorkshire, the North Staffordshire, and Furness.
- 4.—Eastern, combining the Great Northern, Great Central, and Great Eastern.
- 5.—North Eastern, the present North Eastern system, and the Hull & Barnsley.
- 6.—London Group (local lines).
- 7.—Scottish Group, the whole of Scotland.

Each group should have a Board of Management, consisting of representatives of the shareholders, who should form a majority of the Board, and of employees, of whom one-third might be leading officials of the group, to be co-opted by the rest of the Board, and two-thirds members elected from and by the workers on the railways. Permanent machinery was proposed to be set up dealing with questions of wages and conditions, and the State was to have power to (A) protect the public, (B) the economic working of the railways, and (C) the safeguarding of national interests. The Ministry held that very large savings could be effected by standardisation of methods and machinery, and by introducing co-operative working methods. The railways were regarded as neither adequate nor entirely suitable to meet the growing needs of the community, neither for agriculture, industry, nor housing. It was further

proposed to modernise canals and waterways, to bring them into line with modern needs. Railway property was stated to amount to £1,200,000,000, and the outgoings and incomings of the railway companies to exceed £500,000,000 a year.

This report evoked a triangular battle which is not yet settled, and the noise of it will reverberate for long after this history is in the hands of its readers. The Companies began to investigate every detail of the White Paper, and late in 1920 issued a trenchant document which freely criticised the State proposals. They found fault with the proposed grouping, as lacking financial stability and balance, and suggested five different groups, but most severely they differed from the proposal to have members of the Board of Management "elected by and from the workers." That phrase they picked upon, and offered as an alternative a series of sub-committees, whose chairmen should be directors, and which should have advisory powers to the Board of each Group. They declined to accept the principle of matters of management and discipline being dealt with by a composite Board, and suggested as alternative a series of improved Conciliation Boards. They also strongly complained against the financial clauses of the White Paper, while the Government left them to find a way out.

On the other hand the Societies of railway workers, like our own, the R.C.A., and the N.U.R., were adamant against the railways going back to private control, and firmly insisted that the half million men who invest their whole life in the railway interest should have a fuller share in the control of the undertaking and their destiny than was proposed. The A.S.L.E. & F., in collaboration with the Railway Clerks' Association, promoted a very able Memorandum and Draft of a Ministry of Transport (Transfer of Railways) Bill, which clearly demonstrated the desires of the Society in this important matter when the existing form of control expires on August 14th, 1921. The Bill indicated with considerable detail the method in which the change could be effected with little or no inconvenience, and with advantage to the railway stockholders, the public, and the railway staffs.

Clause 2 of the Bill provided that six months after the passing of the Act all the property of the railway companies and the railway clearing houses shall vest in the Minister without any formal conveyance being necessary, including those canals which are owned by railway companies as part of their undertakings. It was proposed under Clause 3 that the purchase shall be carried through by the issue to the railway companies stock and shareholders direct, on the surrender for cancellation of the railway stock and share certificates which they hold, of a specially created Government railway stock, charged on the State railway undertaking and the Consolidated Fund, which shall bear such a rate of interest as would enable it at the time of issue to be realised at par. It was further suggested that the purchase price shall be calculated on the basis of the pre-war market price of the existing railway securities, but be subject to a reduction proportionate to the amount by which securities generally have depreciated in value in consequence of the war, following the policy which the Liquor Trade Finance Committee indicated as being proper if the State purchased the liquor interest.

Figures are developed which show that the pre-war value of stocks issued prior to January 1st, 1914 and a value at mean prices ruling in 1917 of stocks issued since December 31st, 1913, came to approximately £1,111,126,000, which sum, subject to a depreciation reduction, calculated at 25 per cent., would be £836,750,500. A suggested new stock equal to that amount would have to be provided, in addition to a liability of £12,102,900 in respect to various loans contracted by the companies, making the total capital provision £848,853,400. These were calculations subject to error, but Sir William Plender has adduced exact figures which show the net capital (including loans) issued by the companies at December 31st, 1913, to be £1,120,867,965. Clause 4 provides for the railway companies' stocks and shares ceasing to bear interest and dividend from the date of the transfer, from which date the new stock would carry interest. Clause 5 provides for the redemption of the stock at par within a period of sixty years. Clauses 6 to 12 deal with

stocks, keeping of accounts, and development of railways. Clauses 13 and 14, dealing with management, are as follow :—

13.—The actual management of the transferred undertakings, for the time being vested in the Minister, shall be conducted, subject to the overriding authority of the Minister, by seven Railway Commissioners.

14.—The Railway Commissioners shall consist of a chairman and six other members, who and whose respective successors shall be appointed as follows :—

1.—The chairman and two members shall be appointed by the Minister, one member shall be appointed by the Treasury, and three members shall be appointed by the Minister from persons nominated by the recognised railway trade unions.

2.—The Commissioners shall hold office at His Majesty's pleasure.

3.—The Commissioners shall be required to give the whole of their time to their duties, and shall each receive the same salary.

4.—There shall be paid to the Commissioners out of the Railway Fund such sum as the Treasury may from time to time determine.

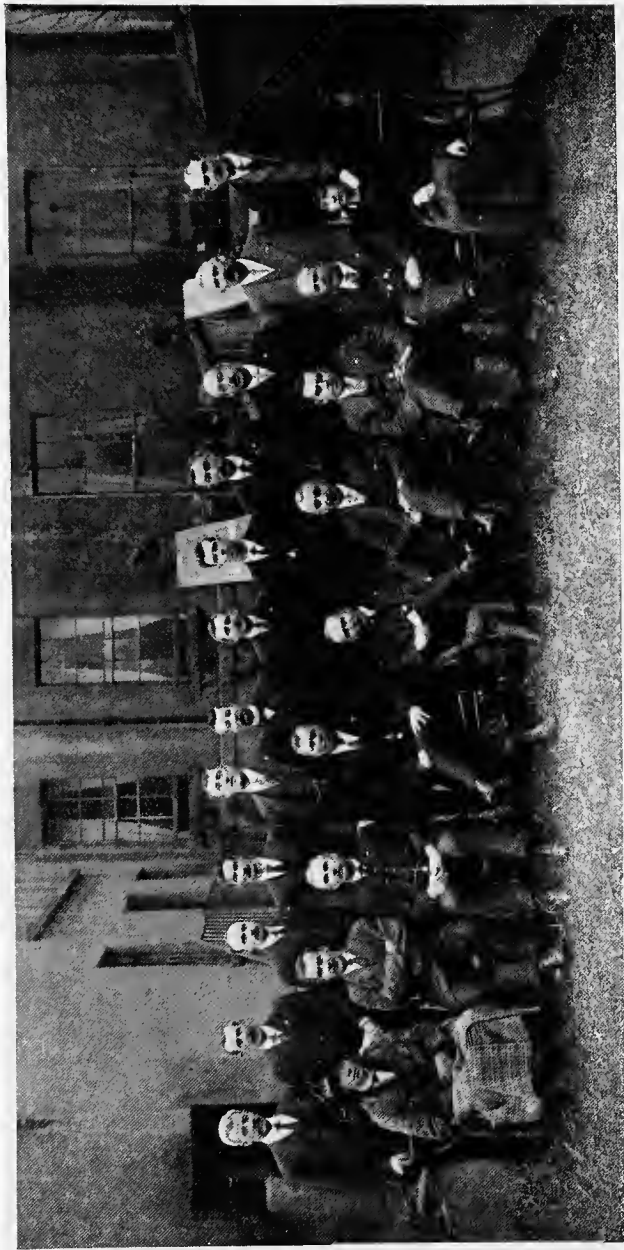
Clause 20 contains provisions for the pension or superannuation of all transferred officers and servants, and Clause 21 gives such officers and servants complete civil rights to participate in any civil or political action as if they were not employed by the State, and :—

(2) Any person employed under the Minister who is about to contest a Parliamentary election, or has been elected a member of the Commons House of Parliament, shall, on making application to the Minister, be granted leave of absence from duty during such contest, and one month thereafter, or so long as he continues to be a member of the Commons House of Parliament, and three months thereafter. On the expiration of such leave of absence, such person

may resume his employment under the Minister in such capacity as the Minister shall direct.

For our purpose Clause 31 is also of importance :—

“ For the purpose of securing the greatest possible efficiency in the operation of the undertakings to be vested in the Minister in pursuance of this Act, and of maintaining the goodwill and co-operation of the officers and servants engaged therein, the Minister shall, as speedily as practicable, prepare a scheme for affording to the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, the National Union of Railwaymen, and the Railway Clerks' Association, adequate representation on behalf of their members on Boards to be established for the purpose of advising the Minister on, and adjusting disputes which may arise in connection with, their remuneration and conditions of service, and for giving effect thereto.”



Executive Committee and Irish Representatives, Irish Locomotive Settlement, February, 1920.

Top Row :—COUN. D. S. HUMPHREYS, J.P., E.C.; MESSRS. J. FERGISON; H. J. OXLADE, E.C.; J. MCCURTAIN; S. GARRISON, E.C.; W. W. COOKE, E.C.; W. GAMBLE, E.C.; W. COLE; J. DUNNE; W. BATTEN; S. HYNES; J. RYAN.

Bottom Row :—MRS. RYAN; COUN. R. T. MACKERETH, E.C.; C. JARMAN, E.C.; W. J. R. SQUANCE, E.C.; J. BROMLEY, Gen. Sec.; J. WALKER, E.C.; A. A. HOLDER, E.C.; J. C. BRANSON, E.C.; *MISS R. SWIFT.

*Miss R. Swift, of the General Office Staff, had acted as Secretary to the General Secretary and Executive Committee in all agitations and strikes from 1916, and had braved the danger of the unsettled state of Ireland in 1920 to continue her duties.

CHAPTER XXIV

Irish Questions — Fraternal Visitors — Eyesight Test — 75,000 Members—Further Advances—Supervisory Members—The Miners' Strike—Marching Forward—The Best is Yet to Be.

THE year 1920 was probably quite as heavy for the Executive Committee as the year 1919. They had long and tiring sittings, sometimes of eight weeks continuously, and the subjects which occupied their attention were of a wonderfully varied character. Early in the year they visited Ireland, to act in respect to Irish railway conditions, and the attempt to exclude the narrow gauge line locomen from the full wage rates. Mr. Bromley successfully argued the companies out of that position, and the Irish locomotivemen were highly gratified with the victory secured on their behalf, especially as the award dated back to August 15th, 1919.

For various reasons Ireland was continuously in the picture. On July 8th Mr. Bromley and Mr. Stevenson visited as fraternal delegates the A.G.M. of the N.U.R., assembled in Belfast, as a complimentary return of the unique feature at the A.A.D. of the Society in May, when Messrs. Thomas and Cramp were most cordially received at Leeds. This exchange of visits, following on the united action of 1919, displayed possibilities of far greater strength by united action on many national matters, and it would be to the undoubted advantage of both societies to arrive at a complete

understanding, and to eliminate all causes of past friction and competition. I have previously indicated lines upon which this could be accomplished.

A simple and practical eyesight test for enginemmen came much nearer being an accomplished fact in 1920, reduced to the Eldridge-Green lantern instead of wools and beads. All the old devices of the different companies were to give place to a national standard test of colours and a practical signal test, a reasonable and just test for vision, applied periodically. The details were presented to the 1920 Conference by Mr. Worthy Cooke, and accepted subject to adequate provision for those who fail to pass, on the lines indicated in the National Programme. The first hundred men to undergo the test in 1921 reported very favourably upon it, and the year therefore saw the relegation into the past of stringent and irritating tests which had failed many men unfairly, and brought them to shed work at reduced rates of pay. The resolution of acceptance carried by Conference fittingly placed on record its appreciation of the services rendered to the fraternity.

The Conference over, there came the task of compiling a scheme of local machinery, in conjunction with the N.U.R. Executive; the final adjustment of the Eyesight Test; and questions remitted to the Central Wages Board. Mr. Bromley launched an appeal for 75,000 members by the close of the year, and lo, it was so! Certain additions to the National Programme were decided upon—that no boy under 16 should be employed as a cleaner; that engine turn-tables should be electrified or otherwise mechanically turned; that wages should be paid weekly, each man to receive an itemised pay docket on the previous day. In Scotland the men were generally paid fortnightly.

The Unemployment Insurance Act, embracing nearly twelve million workers, and providing for their unemployment relief, caused long negotiation, extending from March to December. It was held by the Society that as its members were in regular employment on the railways, they could secure exemption under the clause accepted by the Committee on the Bill on April 22nd, pro-

viding that employment under a local or public authority, where a person was not subject to dismissal except for misconduct or neglect, need not be brought under the Act. "This Amendment would appear to meet the claim for exemption put forward by your Executive Committee," wrote the Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, "since it would clearly not be right or desirable to exclude from the benefit of insurance against unemployment railway employees whose conditions of service are not such as to bring them within the terms of exception, and are therefore exposed to the risk of discharge in periods of slackness." This was followed by further representation until the eve of November 8th, when the Act came into force. Then a certificate of exemption was suggested for all railway workers not subject to dismissal except for misconduct, neglect, or inability to perform their duty. However, some of the Companies criticised this, took legal advice, and eventually it was arranged that railwaymen should come under the Act during their first three years of service.

It had been decided early in the year to submit the following items to the Central Wages Board :—(1) Wage rates as per National Programme; (2) Retiring allowance; (3) Ill-health or eyesight causing removal; (4) 14 days holiday; (5) Payment for night duty, 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.; (6) Sunday duty pay and overtime rates; (7) the Guaranteed Week; (8) The Mileage Rates. The case for these was laid before the National Railway Wages Board on May 18th, 19th, 20th and 27th.

There were present :—Members of the Board: Sir William Mackenzie, K.B.E., K.C. (Chairman); Sir Herbert Walker, K.C.B.; Sir Henry Thornton, K.B.E.; Sir I. Thomas Williams, Mr. D. A. Matheson, Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., Mr. W. J. Abrahams, Mr. W. J. R. Squance, Mr. W. Stevenson, Sir Thomas Robinson, M.P., Mr. E. Manville, M.P., Mr. H. J. May, Mr. W. Davis (on 19th, 20th and 27th only), Mr. G. T. Reid (Secretary).

Mr. C. T. Cramp represented the National Union of Railwaymen.

Mr. J. Bromley and Mr. W. Worthy Cooke represented the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

Mr. S. A. Parnwell and Mr. G. H. Wheeler represented the Committee of Railway Managers.

Witnesses for A.S.L.E. & F. :—Mr. W. D. Found (Cleaner), Mr. G. J. Greasley (Fireman), Mr. C. Jarman (Driver), Councillor D. S. Humphreys, J.P., C.C. (Driver).

Mr. Bromley's opening statement occupied an hour and a half, and made a very decided impression as he recounted the long apprenticeship served as cleaner, fireman and driver, until superannuation time is almost reached before the very modest maximum is attained. He detailed the mechanical knowledge and skill needed, the Sunday morning study classes, and the experience that alone made the competent driver; the dangers of the occupation, the drivers and firemen being there first in every calamity. During 1915, he showed, 1,673 drivers were injured, 27 of them fatally, and 2,022 firemen were injured, 23 of them fatally, proving that six per cent. of the drivers and eight per cent. of the firemen were injured during 1915, fatally or otherwise. The General Secretary gave a very real description of the arduous work of the fireman.

"I have a mass of figures," he continued, "dealing with practically all classes of skilled men, but realising the patience of the Board and the length of the proceedings, I am going to ask you to accept my statement when I say that in none of these awards, or findings, or arbitration settlements, are there any skilled men but what they have received a higher percentage increase than the men that I represent; and, consequently, I would appeal to the Board to take this view, that here are men who rightly or wrongly (rightly I claim, and rightly our 62,000 members claim), say that they are skilled men, they are craftsmen, they have the skill and knowledge of tools and the machine that they work, who have at their own expense and in their own time perfected their knowledge, who work irregularly, who work exposed to all weathers, who work in danger and dirt, who work on a moving, oscillating, aye, almost flying platform, and who have been trying for years to be recognised not as uncommon individuals, not as some special brands of humanity, but as

skilled and responsible workers ; and instead of ever getting to that position, instead of a wage increase in comparison with others who are recognised as skilled men, even during the abnormal period that we have been passing through, they have slipped further behind than ever they were before ; in other words, they are receding from the position."

W. D. Found, an engine cleaner on the North Eastern Railway at Leeds, was next called to give evidence. He said he had been in the Company's service for seven and a half years, and was now 23 years old. He had not yet been promoted to fireman.

He had friends who were fitters, and these men reached their maximum, say, at the age of 21. His rate of pay as a cleaner was 9s. 6d. a day, including war wages. He was married, and found it difficult to live on that.

George J. Greasley, a Midland Railway fireman, stationed at Leicester, said he had put in 24 years for the Company, and was now 45 years of age. He passed as a driver last January, qualifying at his own expense. Since then he had had five trips, an average of one a month. His present rate of pay was 12s. a day, whether firing or driving.

Mr. Bromley : What are your prospects of promotion as a regular driver ?—Very remote. (Laughter).

If you were to be promoted to be a driver to-morrow, what age would you be when you received your maximum rate ?—Fifty-three.

The witness added that he had studied at his own expense to pass the necessary examination. His was no unusual case of a man with long service without promotion. There were 20 men before him, and promotion came by seniority. There were 30 men behind him with over 20 years' service each.

Replying to Mr. Stevenson, a member of the Board, the witness said he attributed slow promotion to the existence of overtime. The men on the Midland Railway had made efforts to get the overtime question dealt with ; but without success.

Sir Thomas Robinson : It seems an unreasonable thing for a

company to keep a man twenty or thirty years as a fireman without promoting him.

Sir Thomas Williams : Since the eight hour day was introduced the Midland Railway Company have promoted 1,065 firemen to be drivers.

Witness : There are many working 12 and 13 hours at a stretch at Leicester. That is not an eight hour day. No inducement is offered for old drivers to retire. Sufficient steps have not, in my opinion, been taken to introduce the eight hour day generally. I know a driver who is seventy-three years of age.

Charles Jarman, a driver on the London & South Western Railway at Exeter, said he had been 36 years in the Company's service and 22 years as a driver. They had purchased premises at Exeter for £700 for the purpose of improvement classes and lectures, in order to make efficient drivers.

The men had voluntarily taken upon themselves this responsibility, and the classes and lectures were regularly attended by the men, with benefit to the Company and themselves, which was doubly essential these days, when the strain on the engines was increased, and they had to deal with an inferior quality of coal.

Mr. Thomas : Do you think that if the workers were properly remunerated they would become the loyal and contented body of men they formerly were, and that this would make for efficiency ?—Most decidedly.

Mr. Squance : Would it be correct to say that when you are in charge of a train, apart from the human lives in your care, you are in charge of property to the value of £50,000 ?—Yes.

And you are performing that duty and bearing that responsibility for a remuneration which works out at 1s. 10½d. an hour ?—That is so.

Mr. David Humphreys, of Mexborough, a Great Central Railway driver, said that much of the dissatisfaction among the men was due to the existence of so many scales of payment, covering a large number of years. He suggested a flat rate as a remedy.

The case for the employers was then opened.

The result of the deliberations of the National Railway Wages Board on the application of the railway employees for an advance of £1 per week was made known on June 4th. Advances, ranging according to grade and district from 2s. to 7s. 6d. per week proportionately to their pre-war rates, were granted to men other than those in the locomotive and signalmen's grades, and, in addition to the 3s. per week already granted to the locomotive grades, drivers were to receive 7s., firemen 4s., and cleaners (over 18 years of age) 2s. per week. The Wages Board added that the claims by the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen in respect of holidays, rates for overtime, Sunday and night duty, and the exclusion of Sunday from the "guaranteed week" were considered not to have been established.

The effect of the award on the various grades is briefly indicated in the following lists :—

	Per Week.
Grades in industrial districts other than locomotive and signalmen (in addition to 2s. under the sliding scale) - - - - -	4s. to 7s. 6d.
Locomotive grades (additional to 3s. already granted, and 2s. under sliding scale)	
Drivers - - - - -	7s.
Firemen - - - - -	4s.
Cleaners (over 18) - - - - -	2s.

The new rates became payable as from June 14th, and the new scales of pay became as follows :—

DRIVERS, FIREMEN, AND CLEANERS EMBRACED IN THE AGREEMENT,

DATED AUGUST 29TH, 1919.

1	2		3		4		5
Grade.	Rates agreed in August, 1919.		Rates plus 5/- already accrued under the sliding scale.		Proposed New "A" Rates, including the 5/- already accrued.		Increase, Column 4 over Column 3.
	Per Day.	Per Week.	Per Day.	Per Week.	Per Day.	Per Week.	Per Week.
DRIVERS :—							
1st & 2nd Yrs.	12/-	72/-	12/10	77/-	14/-	84/-	7/-
3rd & 4th „	13/-	78/-	13/10	83/-	15/-	90/-	7/-
5th Year ...	14/-	84/-	14/10	89/-	16/-	96/-	7/-
6th Year and onwards ...	15/-	90/-	15/10	95/-	17/-	102/-	7/-
(Maximum Rate to apply at 6th year in future in lieu of the 8th).							
FIREMEN :—							
1st & 2nd Yrs.	9/6	57/-	10/4	62/-	11/-	66/-	4/-
3rd & 4th „	10/6	63/-	11/4	68/-	12/-	72/-	4/-
5th to 10th „	11/-	66/-	11/10	71/-	12/6	75/-	4/-
11th Year, automatically paid minimum Drivers' rate of :—	12/-	72/-	12/10	77/-	14/-	84/-	7/-
CLEANERS :—							
Age 18 and upwards :—	8/10	53/-	9/8	58/-	10/-	60/-	2/-

(Applies to Motormen and Assistant Motormen.)

The report of the award of the National Wages Board was sent out to members, and a ballot taken upon its acceptance, which resulted as follows :—

In favour of acceptance	-	-	19,335
Against acceptance	-	-	7,817
Majority in favour	-	-	11,518

It should be added that the Central Wages Board had also ordered a 2s. per week increase because of a ten points rise in the cost of living, which in June stood at 150 per cent. increase, and in September was 161 per cent. above the normal, warranting a further 2s. from October 1st.

In securing these advances from the companies the Executive did not forget its obligations to its own Office Staff of some twenty loyal workers. Advances were very properly conceded to them to meet the ever-increasing cost of living, and in 1918 there was instituted a superannuation scheme on a joint contributory basis, to make provision for old age retirement of each member of the staff.

The Conference of 1920 had decided that men of the supervisory grades should be admitted to membership of the Society, and might, if they chose, have their separate district branches and do their own business. These grades included locomotive foremen of all ranks, locomotive inspectors, relief supervisors, and officers of control. Many of them took the opportunity to join, and supervisors' branches became a new feature of the year, destined no doubt to increase and multiply in future years. Messrs. Oxlade and Mackereth, of the Executive, were called upon to handle trouble which developed at Hull, a strike taking place over the seniority question, and a settlement being secured by correspondence between the General Secretary and Sir A. Kaye Butterworth.

The Anglo-Polish crisis, and the threatened war by England upon Russia, caused the Executive to proceed to London in August, to a conference of all trade union executives, which resolved upon the creation of a Council of Action, in which every executive vested authority to call out their members. The Society at once issued circulars to branches asking all members to act according to any instructions received from the National Council of Action. Happily, the threat of common action served its purpose, and the strike did not supervene.

Mr. Bromley had been attending the International Socialist Congress at Geneva, and its sittings had just concluded when the

British representatives were hastily summoned to attend a joint meeting at the House of Commons, on August 9th, representing the whole movement. It included the National Executive of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress. At that meeting a Council of Action of 15 members was formed, Mr. Bromley being one of the five elected to represent the Labour Party Executive. During the next few days meetings were held in every centre, and there was no mistaking the deep fervour of the people against war with Russia.

The national strike of miners, so long impending on a wage issue, developed in October, and continued for three weeks. Like the railway strike of 1919, it was an absolutely solid demonstration, and no picketing was necessary. The stillness of all the mines greatly lowered the volume of railway traffic, and there were prospects of a Triple Alliance strike. On Sunday, October 22nd, a message passed from Downing Street to Russell Square intimating that the Government would be glad to meet representatives of the Miners' Federation. Terms of settlement were signed on October 28th which, as in the case of railways, only put off the evil day, for the Government invited an agreed report from the Coal Association and the Miners' Federation by March 31st.

Many of our members wanted to emphasise their support of the miners by a sympathetic strike, and became so restless by October 15th that Mr. W. Stevenson, who was just about to retire from the Presidency, had to send out a special restraining message to branches to do nothing without the sanction of the E.C.

Mr. W. J. R. Squance succeeded Mr. Stevenson as President of the Society.

The complete de-control of railways became due on August 14th, 1921, and the complete financial de-control of mines on August 30th, subsequently advanced to March 31st, with serious consequences. In both these industries the workers demanded an adequate voice in the control of their own destiny, and in both it was opposed. The builders were leading the way by forming Building Guilds which accepted housing contracts running into hundreds of thousands

of pounds. In many centres they dispensed with contractors and saved £100 per house on the contractors' prices. It seemed as though on parallel lines the Miners, Railwaymen and Builders were forging ahead into a new era, cutting out of the mists of the wage system into the light of a clearer day, in which a new security and a new joy of life shall be realised by all willing workers.

Concluding, as I am now, the story of a century of labour on the railways, in which conditions have been terrible, and are now growing better, I am conscious of an incompleteness. The story is not yet completed, for the best is yet to be. Another historian, forty years hence, may unearth from the cellars and archives of the Associated all the Minute Books, the "Journals," the Circulars, the Reports and the Ledgers, and smile at the toils and the struggles of those dear folks who acted and recorded in 1920-21. May his verdict at least be that the work done now laid the foundations of the brighter history he shall write, in a day when all the officers and shareholders and directors of 52 separate companies have been merged by time into one cohesive service, when no man has the power to sack and suppress his fellow, and when all men feel free indeed, and enjoy their work and their play.

Writing many months ago, in the early pages of this long story of a great movement of men, I said that of all the improvements the nineteenth century brought to men, it was the steam engine which came puffing into the centre of the picture as the greatest of them all. Now, my brothers, carry that greatness into the days to come. For your efforts you have received, and you have knocked off many shackles. You have many branch banners and bands, and on those banners the steam engine takes its place in the ranks of labour. March on fearlessly with it into new adventures for your fellow-men, "never doubting clouds will break," and the next generation of enginemen and firemen will carry on your high traditions.

APPENDIX

Year.	Receipts.			Total Expenditure.			No. of Members.	Total Funds.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1880 ...	551	8	9½	—	...	...	—	551	8	9½
1881 ...	1,371	19	0	436	19	4½	651	1,486	8	5
1882 ...	1,652	17	0	873	2	7	671	2,266	3	2½
1883 ...	1,901	3	10	910	18	10	801	3,256	8	3½
1884 ...	2,341	8	11	1,177	7	5½	1,017	4,420	9	9
1885 ...	2,529	19	0	1,307	1	4½	1,073	5,767	8	1
1886 ...	3,194	0	2	1,673	5	9	1,593	7,288	2	6
1887 ...	3,963	13	10	4,816	9	3	2,067	6,435	7	1
1888 ...	4,510	18	3	2,671	7	10	2,368	8,274	17	6
1889 ...	5,843	9	11	3,174	2	3½	5,039	10,820	4	5
1890 ...	8,407	15	8	4,271	12	10½	—	14,956	7	2½
1891 ...	10,867	18	3	5,093	7	11	—	20,730	17	6½
1892 ...	12,285	9	5½	6,527	17	2	6,710	26,488	9	10
1893 ...	13,613	17	7½	7,617	7	6½	7,015	32,484	19	11
1894 ...	13,758	4	7	6,116	2	3	7,524	40,127	2	3
1895 ...	14,786	6	10	7,500	16	9½	—	47,412	12	3½
1896 ...	14,972	14	1	6,936	5	10	—	55,449	0	6½
1897 ...	15,433	2	9	8,979	13	0½	—	61,902	10	3
1898 ...	15,591	15	3	8,809	0	1	—	68,685	5	5
1899 ...	16,181	10	9½	8,769	1	10½	—	76,097	14	3½
1900 ...	24,278	2	10½	11,513	6	3½	—	88,862	10	10½
1901 ...	18,571	0	8	9,480	6	2½	10,502	97,953	5	4
1902 ...	19,926	17	5	10,497	6	8	—	107,382	16	1
1903 ...	20,115	10	5½	11,763	10	2	—	115,734	16	4½
1904 ...	20,578	12	4	13,304	11	9	—	123,008	16	11½
1905 ...	23,209	3	6	13,562	1	3	—	132,665	19	2½
1906 ...	27,478	2	5	15,758	11	11	—	144,385	9	8½
1907 ...	29,605	13	6	18,151	7	11	—	155,839	15	3½
1908 ...	34,394	1	6	21,957	12	0½	19,800	168,276	4	9
1909 ...	30,467	17	0	24,574	5	1½	19,504	174,169	16	7½
1910 ...	30,627	1	9	21,913	17	7	19,800	182,883	0	9½
1911 ...	33,075	8	9½	30,143	9	7½	23,600	185,814	19	11½
1912 ...	35,907	0	6½	52,009	16	3	26,500	169,712	4	3
1913 ...	39,735	2	11	33,429	5	6	32,200	176,018	1	8
1914 ...	42,043	17	6	33,733	19	10	32,900	184,327	19	4
1915 ...	43,230	4	7	30,600	2	4	33,624	196,958	1	7
1916 ...	45,114	6	10	27,094	3	2	34,039	214,978	5	3
1917 ...	51,473	3	0	36,024	3	8	36,704	230,428	4	7
1918 ...	56,684	18	1	45,229	7	7	39,940	241,893	15	1
1919 ...	73,787	18	3	116,031	3	5	57,184	199,650	9	11

1912 and 1919. Strike Pay accounts for loss of capital.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Members who desire to pursue the study of railway history will find the following list of books to be of service :—

THE RAILWAYS OF ENGLAND, by Wm. Mitchell (1889).

MEN AND RAILS, by Rowland Kenney (1913).

OUR IRON ROADS, by F. S. Williams (1852).

ENGLISH RAILWAYS : THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR RELATION
TO THE STATE, by Cleveland Stevens (1915).

RAILWAYS, by E. R. McDermott (1904).

THE WORKING AND MANAGEMENT OF AN ENGLISH RAILWAY,
by Sir Geo. Findlay (1889).

HISTORY OF ENGLISH RAILWAYS, by John Francis (1851).

HISTORY OF INLAND TRANSPORT, by Edwin Pratt.

HISTORY OF RAILWAY TRADE UNIONISM, by Chas. B. Vincent.

HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONISM, by Sidney Webb (1920).

THE L. & N.W. RAILWAY, by W. L. Steel (1914).

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY, by F. S. Williams (1878).

INDEX

	PAGE
A.S.L.E. & F.	23-24, 29-39, 43-46
„ „ (First Branches)...	53-54
Amalgamation of Companies	21
A.S.R.S.	23-24, 27, 29, 42, 71
All Grades Problem	25
American Engines	113
Aylesbury Disaster	129
American Exchange of Visits	142, 145
Amalgamation Rejected	159
Aisgill Disaster	167
Armistice Signed	234
 Bassett, Vincent Charles	22
Blenkinsop, John	4
“Blucher,” The	7
Bibliography	295
Block Signalling	16
Bass, Michael, M.P.	23
Brooke, Joseph	32, 45, 52, 58
Ball, Thomas	67-68
Benevolent Fund	90-91
Bromley, J.	142, 144, 168-169, 197, 236
Benefits Increased (1918)	225-226
 Canterbury and Whitstable Line	11
“Comet,” The	2
Cook’s Excursions	16-17
Canals	20
Commercial Inn, Holbeck	33, 52
Centralisation of Funds	120

	PAGE
Certificates Bill	129
Crisis of 1907	138
Conciliation Boards (1907)	140
" " (1911)	155-156, 166
" " (1917)	208-210
Cooke, W. W.	144, 157, 216
Control of Railways	173
Craft Unionism	182-186
Conscription Introduced	185
Committee on Reconstruction	224
Conditions of Service (1919)	240-242
Coal Commission	249
Council of Action	289
Dean, Mr. (G.W.R.)	28
Dot and Wool Tests	69
Debs, Eugene	88
Dispute between Societies	136
Dublin Strike	164-165
Dickenson, M. J.	178
District Councils	216, 227
Early Trains	3
Evans, Fred	26, 28, 42
" Experiment," The	8
Emblem of Society	63
Engineers' Strike (1897)	109
Electric Railways	130, 170, 231, 237
European War Starts	172
Exemption Badges	176
Eight Hours Day	199-207
Eyesight Test	255, 282
First Societies of Railwaymen	23
Forty Years in Figures (<i>See Appendix</i>)	293
Ford and Warren	80-81
Fines and Suspensions	100-101
First Representative E.C.	105

INDEX

299

	PAGE
Federation Scheme	110, 120-121, 152
Fox, Albert	118-119, 160-161, 163
First War Bonus	175
Food Prices	180
Federation Scheme (1920)	253-254
Future Control	277
Fraternal Delegates (N.U.R.)	281
Gauges, The Battle of	12, 15
Great Northern Railway	19, 29
Great Western Railway	19
G.R.W.U. Formed	24
G.W.R. Drivers and Firemen	28, 49-50
G.W. Memorial (1889)	85
Grantham Disaster	133
Gourlay, Driver	135
Grading of Men	190
Gretna Disaster	215
General Election (1918)	235
Hawes Junction Disaster	156
Hedley, William	5
Hexthorpe Disaster	80
Huskisson, Mr.	10
Hunter, John	144, 192
Inquests, Representation at	128
Income Tax Rebate	221
International Labour Covenant	253
Knox, Driver	158
" Lancashire Witch," The	8
Leicester & Swannington Railway	12
Leeds, Its First Railway	4
" Locomotion," The	7
Liverpool & Manchester Line	8-10
London & North Western Railway	19, 89
Leeds Committee	32-34

						PAGE
Locomotive Journal	...	...	...	...	...	63, 83
Loughor Disaster	...	...	...	...	...	126
Libel Actions (1917)	...	...	...	...	...	187-188
London Vehicle Workers	...	...	...	...	...	237
Merthyr Tydvil	...	...	...	...	...	4
Midland Railway Company	...	...	...	...	...	13, 15, 19
McCulloch, Driver Wm.	...	...	...	...	...	40
Model Engines	...	...	...	...	...	62-63
Midland Strike (1887)	...	...	...	...	...	64-65
Moore, Geo.	...	...	...	...	...	142-144
Ministry of Labour	...	...	...	...	...	194
Man Power	...	...	...	...	...	217
Ministry of Transport	...	...	...	...	...	249
Miners' Strike (1920)	...	...	...	...	...	290
Newcastle to Carlisle Line	...	...	...	...	...	12
North Eastern Drivers and Firemen	...	...	...	...	...	22
North Eastern Strike (1919)	...	...	...	...	...	256
National Programme	...	...	...	...	...	130, 134
" " (1917)	...	...	...	...	...	211
" " (1918)	...	...	...	...	...	227
" " (1919)	...	...	...	...	...	247
" " (1919)	...	...	...	...	...	260-261
" " (1920)	...	...	...	...	...	282
N.U.R. Formed	...	...	...	...	...	165
Organiser, The First	...	...	...	...	...	67
Orphan Fund	...	...	...	...	...	108, 232
Osborne Judgment	...	...	...	...	...	145
One Union Movement	...	...	...	...	...	220
Perrydarran Tramway	...	...	...	...	...	4
Perry, Charles H.	...	...	...	...	...	31, 53, 62
Pointsmen and Signalmen	...	...	...	...	...	24
" Puffing Billy "	...	...	...	...	...	5
Protection Fund	...	...	...	...	...	34
Postal Train	...	...	...	...	...	62

INDEX

301

							PAGE
Parfitt, H.							99-103, 106
Political Fund							162, 222
Public Representatives							183
Rails, First Use of							3
Railway Enterprise							14, 17, 19
"Rocket," The							9
Rules, First Book of							33
Railway Conditions (1874-1878)							72-75
" " " (1891-1901)							77-78
Royal Commission of 1911							151
Rations Increased							219
Railway Clerks' Association							250
Reinstatement on G.N.R.							256
Railway Advisory Committee							275
Smith, Thos. West							2, 13
Stephenson, George							2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15
Stephenson, Robert							2
Steam Power							3
Stockton & Darlington Line							7
Stourbridge "Lion"							8
Standard Rail Gauge							11
Speed of Trains							16
Stage Coaches							20
Strike Weapon							25
Shuttleworth, Henry							32, 58, 112
Sunter, Thos. G.							52, 55, 58-59, 115-117
Stephenson, W. A.							56, 157
Stretton, Clement E.							68
Select Committee (1891)							95-97
South Leeds Contests							131, 136
Salisbury Disaster							132
Shrewsbury Disaster							139
Strike of 1911							147-150, 154
Strike of 1918							225-226
Strike (National) of 1919							265-271
Sympathetic Strike							157, 164

						PAGE
Sliding Scale Suggested	...	...	...	...	...	181, 191
Sliding Scale Accepted	...	...	...	...	...	228-230
Substitution of Men	...	...	...	...	...	218
Supervisors' Branches	...	...	...	...	...	289
Tay Bridge Disaster	...	...	...	...	...	41
Trevithick, Richard	...	...	...	...	...	4
Tracks, Cost of	...	...	...	...	...	20
Taff Vale Line	...	...	...	...	...	29, 93, 114
Truce of 1914	...	...	...	...	...	172
Tributes to War Work	...	...	...	...	...	213-215
Thanks from N.U.R.	...	...	...	...	...	272-273
Transfer of Railways Bill	...	...	...	...	...	277-279
Ulllyott, Wm.	...	...	...	...	...	29, 62, 170
Unemployment Insurance Act	...	...	...	...	...	282-283
Victimisation	...	...	...	...	...	26, 28, 32, 35
Working Men's Benefit Society	...	...	...	...	...	22
Wylam Colliery Line	...	...	...	...	...	5, 6
Wages	...	...	...	...	...	79, 153
War Wage Negotiations (1917)	...	...	...	...	...	181-182
Wages in 1919	...	...	...	...	...	259
Wage Negotiations (1920)	...	...	...	...	...	283-284
Wage Advances (1920)	...	...	...	...	...	287
Wage Scale (Current)	...	...	...	...	...	288
Webster, Driver (Trial)	...	...	...	...	...	131
Wride, Geo.	...	...	...	...	...	144, 216
War Work Records	...	...	...	...	...	250-252
Zonal System	...	...	...	...	...	276

HD
6668
R32
R27
C.1

Cornell University Library
HD 6668.R32R27

Engines and men; the history of the Asso



3 1924 002 359 077

